



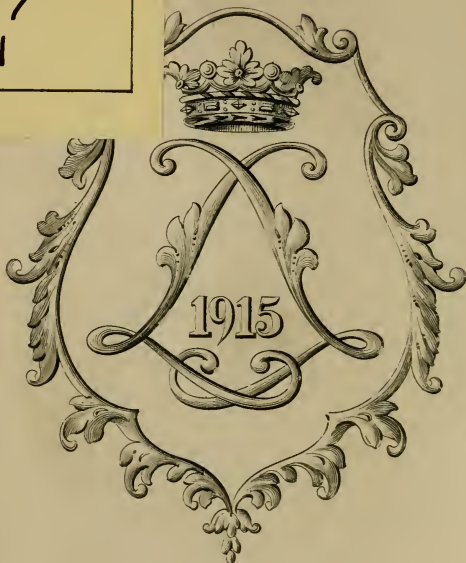


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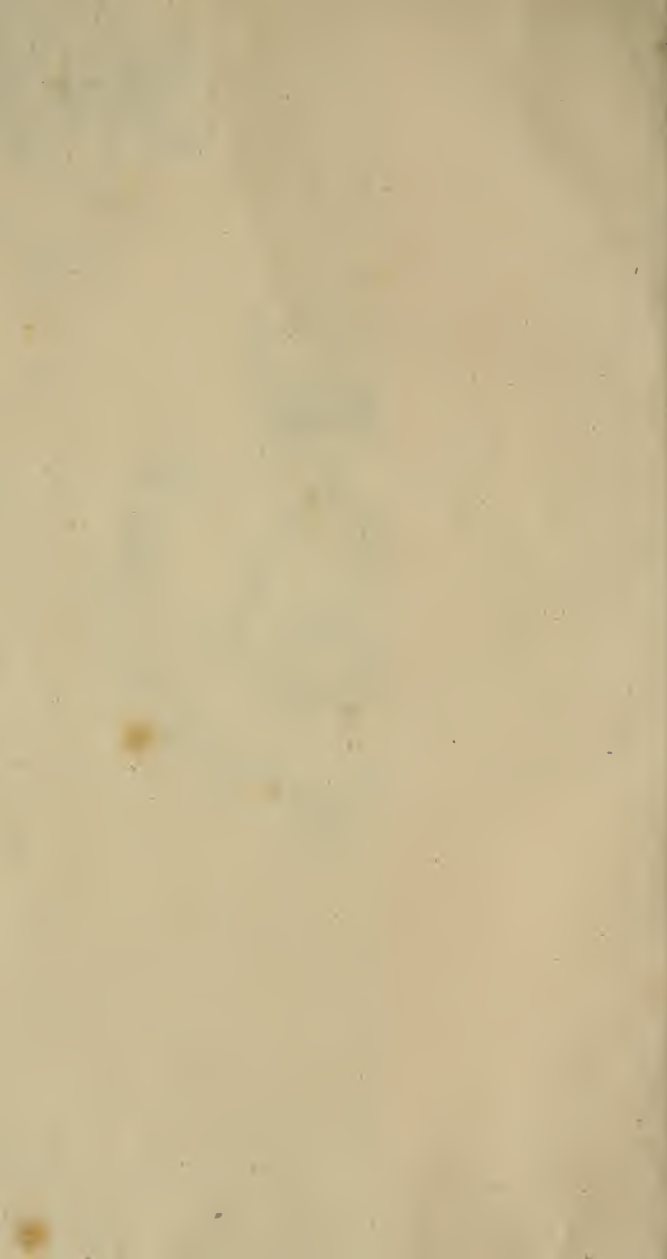
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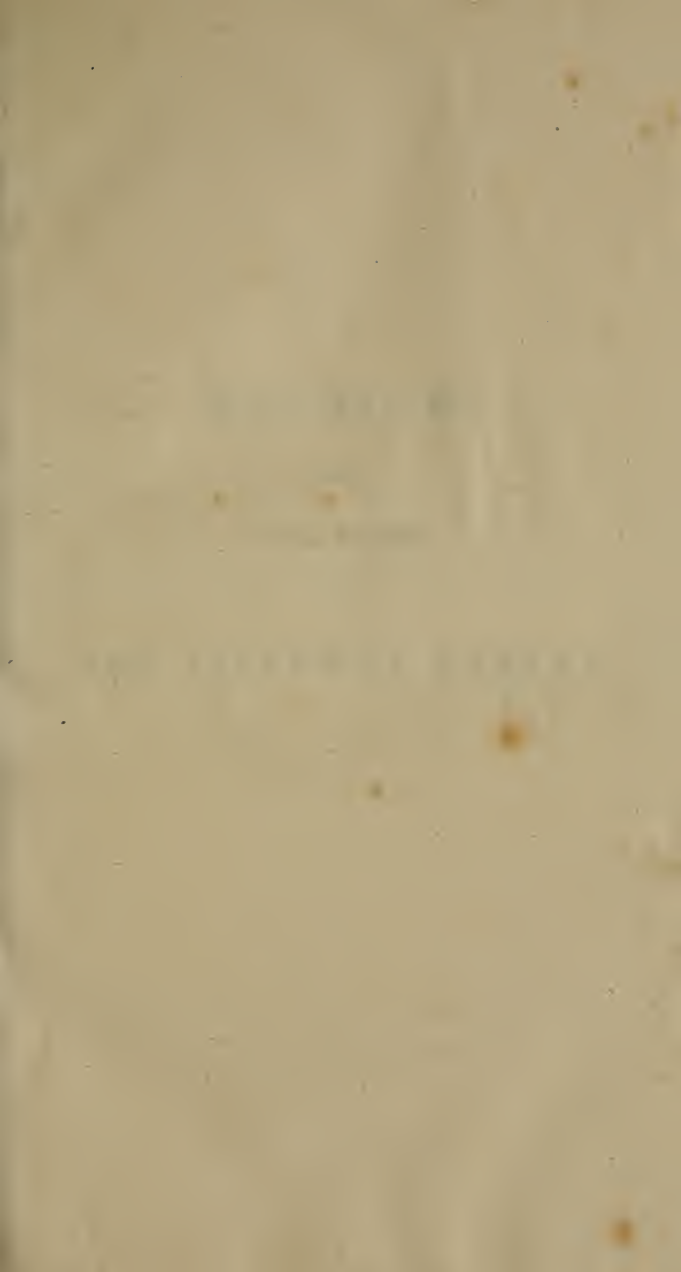
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CAPRICE:

OR

ANECDOTES

OF

THE LISTOWEL FAMILY.

Howlett and Brimmer, Printers,
10, Frith Street, Soho.

CAPRICE:

OR

ANECDOTES

OF

THE LISTOWEL FAMILY.

AN IRISH NOVEL, IN THREE VOLUMES,

By an Unknown.

..... All made of fantasy,
All made of passions, and all made of wishes.
Shakspeare.

VOL. I.

London:

SHERWOOD, JONES AND CO. PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND JOHN ARCHER, DUBLIN.

1824.

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C17

v. 1

CAPRICE.

CHAPTER I.

To aid thy mind's development,—to watch
 Thy dawn of little joys ;—to sit and see
 Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
 Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to thee !
 To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
 And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss—
 Yet this was in my nature, as it is,
 I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

BYRON.

IN a village, some miles from Killarney,
 stood a glebe house, the residence of Mr.
 Kelly, curate of the parish. This gen-
 tleman married the daughter of a re-
 spectable farmer, his parishioner; with
 whom he lived in perfect seclusion, on
 an income of seventy pounds per annum,

M. Loughlin 26 Mar. 53

Gen. Sec. Ray 21 Nov 51 Norman = 24

devoting his time to the duties of his parish; his beloved partner assisting him in instructing the ignorant, and visiting the sick.

An excellent garden at the back of the glebe house occupied their leisure hours. It sloped advantageously to the sun, and had at the upper end, a bower, in which in Summer weather the good couple occasionally had tea, and fruit.

Here they were enjoying the beauty of a fine evening early in the month of August, when Mrs. Kelly, in great surprise, exclaimed, that she heard the sound of carriage wheels: "Who," cried she, "can it be? This is not the time of year our rector visits the parish!"

"Certainly;—still a traveller rarely ventures over this bad road," said the curate. "Listen! It stops at the door! It must be Mr. Belmont!"

"Well, my love!" replied his wife, "he may come.—You are always prepared, and can meet his consequential

airs, and affected zeal for the church and the morals of the parish, without a palpitating heart."

"How can you be so severe! When I see a good effected, I never quarrel with the motive;—except from the pulpit. Look! see, the garden door is opened. Who comes here?"

Jenny ran up the gravel walk, exclaiming—"Oh, mistress! Oh, master! If there bean't be a fine gentleman axing for yese! But, see!—sure he's after me, coming in at the garden gate with a little angel in his arms!"

The gentleman had followed the maid, and on seeing Mr. Kelly coming towards him, slackened his pace, and set down a child. His figure was enveloped in a large loose box coat; he had enormous whiskers, which, with his hat very much down on his head, almost concealed his countenance: still his air was dignified, and his step firm. When they met, he looked rather awkward, and appeared

at a loss how to introduce himself; as Mr. Kelly's countenance seemed to demand an explanation. "I do not know, sir, how to present myself to you; I feel as if you could scarcely pardon my intrusion; particularly when I acquaint you that, although a stranger, I come as a suppliant; and demand from you the greatest of all possible favours." Here he seemed to hesitate.

Mr. Kelly held out his hand. "Be assured, sir, of meeting here with every kindness we can show. Our door is always open to the stranger: my good woman will be happy to pay you every attention.—Further, I fear, we cannot promise, as our means of doing as we wish are very limited."

The good curate now led the way to the summer-house, and recommended the gentleman to his wife, who was struck with the beauty of the child, a lovely little girl, of about four years of age; richly, and most fantastically

dressed, but appearing in delicate health, and much fatigued. With the shyness natural to her age, she clung to her father. Mrs. Kelly, however, offering her some fine fruit, soon succeeded in attracting her attention.

It occurred to Mr. Kelly, that the gentleman must be an actor; he felt shocked when he considered the probability of the lovely child being trained up to an idle life. From the stranger's appearance, he could not suppose him in want of money; yet he felt very anxious before he should urge his request, to make him acquainted with the state of his affairs.

There was an awkward pause in the conversation; the subjects of the beauty of the garden, of the weather, of the child, &c. were exhausted; and every one appeared thoughtful. On the child's complaining of being sleepy, the stranger looked at his watch, and observed, it was long after her bed hour. She grew very peevish, and begged he would

take her home in the carriage to her mamma: he tried in vain to pacify her; at length she began to cry bitterly, and said, she would—she must go home.—Mrs. Kelly requested permission to prepare a bed for her. The stranger apologized for trespassing so much on their hospitality; but, as the child had been lately ill, he feared proceeding further on their journey that evening was impossible.

“Be under no uneasiness, my dear sir; consider yourself at home here. This village does not afford an inn; nor is there any house here in which you could be accommodated. Indeed, we do not wish it to be otherwise, our roads are so bad, we look upon a stranger as on a *rara avis in terris*, and we claim him for our exclusive property. We shall give you Mr. Belmont, our rector’s, apartment, which is tolerably comfortable; he generally pays us a visit three or four times a year.”

Mrs. Kelly now returned for the

child, who was fast asleep; she bore her as quietly as possible from her father's arms, saying, she had made up a little bed for her close to her own.

The gentlemen then entered into conversation. The curate stated his circumstances, and gave a short statistical account of the surrounding country.

Mrs. Kelly returned in about an hour, in raptures with the child, declaring she was the sweetest baby she ever beheld. Her countenance beamed with kindness and maternal love as she repeated her infantine sayings.

The stranger, evidently highly gratified, said—"I see, madam, my Louisa has, according to my earnest wish, interested you in her favour. I presume you are fond of children?"

"Very fond, indeed, sir; there is no blessing in life I so covet. My good man tells me I often break the tenth commandment: I am sure I did so within this last half hour, when I con-

templated your lovely child as she slept."

"My dear madam!" exclaimed the stranger; "you enchant me! These are the very feelings I wish you to have; for, strange to tell, I have set my heart on leaving you my child. I hope and trust, from your great partiality to my Louisa, that you will plead her cause with Mr. Kelly, and finally prevail on him to adopt her."

"Is it possible!" said Mrs. Kelly; "will you indeed part with her? Oh, my dear Edward! is she not a gift sent from Providence?—and yet you look hesitatingly."

"Consider our very small income,—and—see, the child seems to have been nursed in the lap of luxury. Look even at her dress: is it not rich and expensive? beyond even what I have beheld on noblemen's children. I protest, a year's income would not purchase such another."

“Alas! my dear sir! we are all creatures of habit; she is too young yet to have formed any. These fine things were necessary to her mother’s happiness; she loved to see her decked in them. For me, I think they sow the seeds of vanity in the infant mind; and the consequences are deplorable of attending, in early education, only to dress, the cultivation of showy talents, and the preservation of beauty. You will think my fears on this subject are very strong, when I acknowledge to you that—but I fear you will be so amazed—yet I must deal candidly with you, and entrust to you, that my anxiety to have this darling a rational being, forces me actually to steal her from her mother! I mean, when I return home, to fabricate a tale of her death. I am grieved to the heart thus to wound my wife’s feelings; but what can I do? Remonstrance is vain; nor is she, I am mortified to own, capable of bringing her up in the simple manner I wish. I see

I have astonished you, and that you even doubt the soundness of my mind?"

"Forgive me!" rejoined the good curate, "I am indeed, sir, amazed! It is a most extraordinary—a most unheard of proceeding—to kidnap your own child! Consider, she may hereafter, by this measure, lose her place in society; and you may, from her tender age, have trouble to prove her identity."

"I have considered every thing," said the stranger, "and provided against every contingent. Will you comply with my request? I will give you fifty pounds in hand: the same sum yearly, or more if you require it."

"You astonish me!" replied Mr. Kelly. "Can it be possible that you have wealth to pay so liberally for your daughter, and yet bring her to the mountains of Kerry, for education? My dame is a most excellent housewife, certainly; and can make cream cheese and family wine admirably."

"That is just," said the stranger,

“what I wish my daughter to be; a good housewife, brought up in a decent plain way, not like a queen-bee, flying about with a whole hive at her heels, and making a fuss about her delicacy, her sensibility, and refinement.”

Mr. Kelly had no further objection to make. His wife was in raptures, and could scarcely believe in her happiness. Every thing was arranged, highly to the satisfaction of all parties. The stranger refused to tell his name, and requested they would give theirs to his daughter. On entering the house, when candles were introduced, he avoided their glare, under pretence of sore eyes; they observed, in speaking, his voice was feigned, and they sometimes thought the stiffly curled brown wig he wore, and which entirely concealed his forehead, was put on merely for the purpose of disguise. He remained there that night, and left them the next morning, before the child awoke; having paid fifty pounds to Mr.

Kelly; who received it, thinking it not improbable he might never see or hear from him again; and that it might yet serve for a portion for the little girl, whom he was determined henceforth to consider as his own child.

CHAPTER II.

Why did the Gods give thee a heavenly form,
And earthly thoughts to make thee proud of it ?
Why do I ask ? 'Tis now the known disease,
That beauty hath to bear too deep a sense
Of her own self-conceived excellence.

BEN JONSON.

THE stranger whom we must now present to our readers as Captain Listowel, hastened his return to Dublin, feeling at a loss how he should, without discovering the truth, calm his wife, Lady Elizabeth Listowel's anxiety, concerning her eldest daughter.

Her ladyship, the only daughter of the late Earl of Ardsallagh, was considered, on being presented to the fashionable world, a star of the first magnitude: her extreme beauty and showy

accomplishments dazzled even nice discerners of character ; and some time had elapsed after their union, before Listowel discovered that her attainments were merely superficial, and that her mind was left uncultivated, a prey to faults naturally springing from such neglect.

The first year of their marriage glided on tolerably ; but his disappointment became bitter, as he saw her unceasingly pursue the same dull round, interested in nothing, but as it served to gratify her vanity. She became capricious, and courted singularity : her two eldest children, Edward and Louisa, were dressed to represent Cupid and Psyche. Listowel's remonstrances had no weight ; to his lamentation that his children had more the air of a strolling player's than a gentleman's, she requested he would not, by his cynical observations, damp her innocent amusement.

The grievance did not end here ; these poor children spent the mornings shop-

ping, or visiting with mamma; the evenings at the theatre, or some place of gay resort; and at night, not unfrequently this vain mother required their exhibition at her parties, where the fretfulness caused by broken rest could only be appeased by sweetmeats, and an entire submission to their will.

The children evidently were falling sacrifices to these whims; their languid appearance first roused Listowel's anxiety for their weakness, which he now with alarm saw was rapidly increasing, almost to debility; he dreaded that if any illness, incident to childhood, attacked them in their present weak state, they would be lost. Their mother, at his request, consulted Doctor Berry; and he prescribed country air, plain diet, and regular hours: accordingly, they were sent to Holly Mount, his seat in the county of Wicklow. But Lady Elizabeth would never follow any regular plan; of course, the children derived

no benefit from the doctor's prescription. In vain their mother boasted of her anxiety, and looked interesting and unhappy: they still continued to decline. Listowel was miserable; he became sullen and gloomy; and avoiding all his friends, gave himself up to dreadful anticipations; not doubting the time was fast approaching when he should be childless, and lose those dear precious beings who entirely engrossed his affections, and in whom all his hopes of earthly happiness were centred. He reflected they would have more cause to reproach him than their mother; she acted giddily and from want of reflection; and yet he was guided by her: was it not as strange as that a person having eye-sight should submit to be led by one blind? It occurred to him, that if they were brought to the country, far away from her, they might yet be saved.

No time was to be lost; he flattered himself, by being now prompt in his

measures, and firm in his decision, he might make amends for his former passiveness. He therefore hastily arranged his plans, consulting Doctor Berry on the best method of bringing them to bear. The doctor had long been the friend and physician of the family; Listowel had the greatest reliance on his medical abilities; and knew him to possess strength of mind and soundness of judgment.

Much explanation was not necessary to make the doctor enter into all his feelings; but his views he could not be so readily reconciled to. He saw the necessity of an immediate change; and recommended him to remonstrate with Lady Elizabeth, and mentioning his (the doctor's) opinion, that the consequences would be fatal, if she did not allow of their submitting to regularity of diet and hours.

“I have already made use of your name,” returned Listowel. “What was the consequence? A change was cer-

tainly made ; but it was only giving up one whim to adopt others still more ridiculous."

" It is ungracious," said Berry, " to advise a man to act in direct contradiction to his wife. '*Necessitas non habet legem.*' You, my dear friend, have no alternative. You must send the children to Listowel park until they are perfectly reinstated in health ; and then place them at some nursery boarding-school."

" That may answer for my boy," said Listowel ; " but I will never have my girl trained at a boarding-school, to have her such a puppet as her mother."

" There are some excellent schools," replied the doctor, " where you may have your daughters sensibly brought up, and their religious and moral principles strictly attended to."

" I shall not dispute that," said Listowel : " but they would lose at home, in vacation, any benefit they could derive

from good instruction at school. What a life of struggle I should lead! My poor wife! she fancies she is never so interesting as when her children are about her! The other day, when a lady asked her some questions about the resetting the jewels her father gave her;—‘There,’ she replied, pointing to her children, and affecting the dignity of the Roman matron, ‘there are my jewels; from them alone I expect to derive lustre!’ I could tell you a hundred such stories—but to what end—for, I must acknowledge my resolution is taken.—I do not consult you as to the decision; only as to the execution of my plan. Mr. Kelly, a most respectable clergyman, was appointed to the curacy of Laun; he is married to a very worthy woman, a complete Mrs. Primrose; they live at the Glebe, within half a mile of Listowel Park. To his care, and to his wife’s, I will intrust my Louisa. My agent Mr. Jackson, and his wife,

a most worthy couple, and devoted to my interest, have promised me to reside at Listowel Park, in order to have a watchful eye over Miss, and to inform me occasionally of her improvement; and, that she may be entirely out of the contagion of her mother's folly, I will feign a story of her death. Yes, you may well look amazed, and tell me, perhaps, as my wife sometimes does, that I do not understand how matters are conducted on land. But it signifies not: I am at home long enough to see, that without the assistance of an amphibious sort of animal, like myself, the poor children would be lost; you alone, excepting those employed, shall be privy to my secret. I will place in your hands every necessary document, in case of my sudden death, to restore my Louisa to her family.—This plan I think will answer.—There is little danger of my Elizabeth's discovering the deceit, Listowel

Park being the last part of the globe she would visit.—Her will is her law—she would have it mine.—She knows how I have been influenced by my father's wishes—strongly instanced in my withdrawing from the naval profession, where I had served fifteen years, and obtained the rank of post captain:—this you may judge, from knowing my early predilection for the navy, cost me a severe struggle;—and yet, although she knows it was my father's dying request that I should reside at this seat of my ancestors; and that to induce her to make it her residence I have expended large sums of money in modernizing, in furnishing, in short, in making it a dwelling for a princess—and then its vicinity to the lakes;—every thing considered, she might, to indulge me, at least go there for a few months in the Summer. On my urging it, there were a few scenes acted; she fell into hysterics, continued the whole

of the day from one fit to another: she said, I did not care for her, and alluding to a voyage I made the preceding year with my uncle, said my love could not stand the test of absence and salt water. What could I say?—not that my love for her was unabated:—I therefore yielded the point, and gave her the proof she desired.”

Doctor Berry in vain attempted to dissuade him from his purpose, by exposing its extreme wildness, and the misfortunes it might in future bring on his daughter. Listowel remained firm to his purpose, and in a short time had every necessary preparation made. The children were at Holly Mount with their mother, whom he brought to town, under pretence of meeting her brother, who was hourly expected from Oxford. The day following, an express arrived to inform her that Miss Louisa had the measles; a disorder Lady Elizabeth particularly dreaded; she was, therefore,

easily prevailed on to remain in Dublin with her brother, whilst Listowel and the doctor went to nurse the child. When she saw him departing without her, she begged and intreated to be allowed to go; but Listowel told her, he would not suffer her sympathizing mind to be so distressed. “No, she should not see them suffer; she must wait until health’s opening roses again bloomed on their cheeks.”

Listowel remained at Holly Mount, until Louisa gained sufficient strength for travelling. Doctor Berry frequently took advantage of this delay, to remonstrate with Listowel on the hazard he ran, on the great responsibility he took on himself, and how he might hereafter be condemned;—that the world would censure or applaud the strange measure he was about to take, according to its success: there was some danger of its scoffing when her milk-maid manners came to be the topic of

the day ; and how could he, hereafter, ever restore her to her family without reflecting discredit on her mother !’

Sometimes Listowel listened patiently to the good doctor ; at other times he would expostulate, and say that as his children inherited grace and beauty from their mother, they should be indebted to him for a sensible and religious education. Mary, his youngest child, he was resolved, should, when of a proper age, follow her sister ; and if he had fifty daughters they should all be educated at the curate’s.

Lady Elizabeth, on hearing Listowel’s report of Louisa’s danger, was unaffectedly miserable, and in anxiety for her forgot her horror of measles, and requested permission to visit her. Hitherto her delicate sensibility and extreme tenderness of heart, having been shown only for effect, or evinced for objects that rendered them ridiculous, were consequently treated by him with

as much contempt as a man of his breeding could show. Now the case was different, he felt he had brought on her a severe stroke of affliction : he felt the deceit he was practising dreadfully irksome, and contrary to his open, ingenuous temper. However, he did not repent the step he had taken, although he felt as a severe judge himself, when, the next day, she was fainting in his arms, on receiving the account of the death of her little girl. His self-reproaches were bitter, and he endeavoured with the greatest tenderness to mitigate her sufferings.

Lady Elizabeth was strongly attached to her brother, the Earl of Ardsallagh, who was her very counterpart ; but his beauty was of a more manly character, his feelings more genuine ; yet his vanity, or his puppyism, was extreme. He returned with warmth his sister's affection, and loved and respected her husband. He now strongly recom-

mended to them change of scene, requesting they would fulfil their promise of accompanying him to Tarmonbarry.

They accordingly left Dublin towards the end of July. The change of scene, the variety of company, soon banished from Lady Elizabeth's versatile mind all sentiment of care. She likewise perceived that real affliction is very unbecoming, leaving lamentable traces on the countenance, destroying the freshness of youth; whereas fancied woe gives only an interesting pensive look, that can be laid aside at pleasure. Minds truly susceptible, according to her sentimental creed, are tremblingly alive to happiness as well as misery; their elasticity of feeling experiencing rapid transitions from rapture to agony.

The Listowels remained in the country until the shooting season was over: and then, as Lady Elizabeth expected shortly to be confined, it was necessary for them to return to Dublin. Listowel earnestly

prayed he might have a son, for although more than ever convinced of his wife's inability to educate a daughter, yet he was determined any he should have in future, must with Mary take their chance; as he never would voluntarily go through the same difficulties again.

His prayers were not heard: she was delivered soon after their return of a daughter.

As soon as possible, Lady Elizabeth entered into all the dissipation of Dublin. She wished to have Edward sent for from school; but this Listowel positively refused. Mary she considered too young for a plaything; therefore her father sent her, with the infant Frances, to Holly Mount.

When the amusements of Dublin were over, Listowel proposed they should spend the Summer in the South of France, to re-establish Lady Elizabeth's health, which had suffered much from late

hours and crowded rooms, so soon after her confinement. She joyfully assented. "We must," said she, "take all the children; an English child is so admired in Paris. Mr. Fanshaw's little boy is not near so fine a child as Frances; yet he was the admiration of all Paris; crowds came to see him; they were charmed with his loose dress, so different I hear, from what they are accustomed to see on their own children. They have the poor things swathed up in a most barbarous fashion."

"Fanny is too young, my love, to feel pleasure from admiration. We had better leave the children at home," said Listowel gravely.

"Not for the world! I shall be thought so much more of, if we take this lovely child. Pray, my love," said she, smiling,

——"Who that owned
An em'rald, jasper, or rich chrysolite,
Would hide its lustre, or not bid it blaze
Conspicuous on his brow?"

“ Alas ! madam, I fear you will never consider your children as accountable beings ; we shall— however, I shall say no more ; you know my decision.”

“ I hate that word decision ! it sounds so peremptory : as much as to say, do not tease me with objections. I would not, even to Edward, use such an expression.”

“ I believe you are right ; if it was more in my actions there would be no occasion to offend your ears by pronouncing the word. Yet, as you have a choice, you cannot complain. I shall now go to my study, and write two letters ;—one to a friend in Paris, to engage an hotel for us ; the other to my steward at Holly Mount, to make preparations for our reception. I will send you both the letters, and you may despatch which of them you please.”

CHAPTER III.

Which to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd.
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn : and happier than this
She is not bred so dull but she can learn ;
Happiest of all, is, that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

LOUISA soon excited an interest in the hearts of the worthy couple at the Glebe ; they pitied her deserted state, and saw, from the vivacity of her temper, that she required a strict and watchful eye : her affectionate disposition was very attaching ; their hearts fondly adopted her ; and they were grateful to Providence for thus throwing her on their protection ; flattering themselves she would be left with them, at least until of an age to hold her proper rank in society. Mr. Kelly was determined she

should not then be mortified by finding herself deficient in any intellectual attainment.

Mr. Belmont, the rector, visited his parish at the usual time ; he was a middle-aged man, rather corpulent, his appearance not dignified. When in company with those, whom, from situation, he considered subservient to him, he assumed a commanding, consequential air. His eyes were small and glancing ; ‘ trifles, light as air,’ came within his observation. Louisa’s presence surprised him : from her bearing the name, and addressing the Kellys as parents, he supposed her their adopted relative, and secretly smiled at their folly in burdening themselves with a sickly child, whom he supposed they would soon have the expense of burying.

On his return at Christmas, he was amazed at Louisa’s improvement, and could with difficulty be persuaded she was the little puny urchin he saw there

a few months back ; he judged the air must be uncommonly salubrious, and as his family, generally in the Summer months, sought health at a distance from home, he determined on bringing them to the Glebe the following June ; never considering how almost impossible it was for Mr. Kelly to find accommodation for so large a party.

The Belmonts came towards the end of July ; the Kellys, with the aid of the Jacksons from Listowel Park, were tolerably prepared for their reception, and had their hospitality rewarded in the satisfaction they afforded their guests.

Mrs. Belmont was the only child of a wealthy grocer, in Cork : being of a volatile disposition, fond of low company, and naturally averse to learning, her parents, whose idol she was, could not contradict her, hoping a large fortune would apologize for the wildness and vulgarity of her manners, and prevent their proving an obstacle to her

raising her rank in society by marriage.

Their hopes were realized by her union with Mr. Belmont; her fortune serving to clear the incumbrances on his estate. He insisted on her giving up her former acquaintances, and would, had it been possible, have refined her manners. Finding this a vain effort, he became reconciled to her vulgarity, and even adopted some of her phrases; however, she had great ideas of her own elevation, and talked at times very consequentially; but finding Mrs. Kelly easily impressed with ideas of her grandeur, she seldom assumed a high manner; and was, as in her own family circle, notable and good-humoured. Her greatest ambition was to set off her daughters to advantage, and have them well married. They were uncommonly clever, accomplished young women, and had early profited by their mother's unceasing lessons, on each displaying on all occasions, her

own and her sisters' acquirements; for, notwithstanding the selfishness which such an education encouraged, they loved each other with sisterly affection.

They were delighted with Louisa; the innocent playfulness of her manners was congenial with their gay dispositions, and they found her so amenable, that even Mr. and Mrs. Belmont were pleased with her, and allowed their daughters to take her on all their parties. The little girl's spirits were exhilarated to their highest pitch; she enjoyed the pleasures of the moment with childish delight; time seemed to have wings. But now a sudden stop was put to her happiness by the arrival of the two Master Belmonts from school. Seeing her dressed in an inferior style, such as the good curate could afford, a brown stuff frock and check bib, they disdained to treat her as their equal; and thought her very impertinent for resenting their rough play.

But this scene, beautiful and healthful as it was, soon wearied Mrs. Belmont. She had here no manœuvring; she considered her daughters wasting their youth particularly provoking, as they were now looking uncommonly well: the regular hours, and constant excitement to exercise heightened their beauty; and gave an expression of ease and cheerfulness to their countenances highly prepossessing. She would sometimes lose all patience, and tell them, as she said, *a bit of her mind*, as it made her more comfortable; at length she became quite restless, and almost angrily told them she could not bear to see them so stupidly composed, so insensible to their *good look-outs*.

One day she came into the parlour just as Miss Belmont had finished her sketch-book, and was looking over it, her countenance beaming with intelligence, whilst she pointed out the different views to her sister.

“ So, child,” said Mrs. Belmont, “ you have drawn all these beautiful landscapes : I suppose you will at least gain credit for you taste, and for your neatness in execution ?”

“ Yes, madam,” returned Miss Belmont, “ I think, as a frontispiece to my work, I will draw this beautiful child’s picture.”

“ You may ; she will yet be a first rate beauty ! and make, if I am not mistaken, as much noise in the world as Mary of Keswick.—I think,” observed this watchful parent, “ I’ll have a care when my boys grow up ; they shall not visit these lakes, nor set a foot here until her story is told. I am mighty glad to see the dislike they have taken to her.”

“ Surely, mamma, you would not observe the likings or dislikings of such children ?” replied her youngest daughter.

“ Not in the general ; but her attractions will, I fancy, be so very uncom-

mon, that if once their young minds were impressed with her image, there she must remain; and they might seek her again when their passions were more alive. *Car.* my dear, I hope you do not neglect adding to your botanical collection; you know what a botanist Colonel Seymour is. I hope, my dear Anne, you do not forget your cabinet of minerals and fossils. Have you set those very pretty verses to music?—Why do you look so thoughtful, Jemima? Upon my credit, child, it makes you look at least ten years older!”

“I was thinking, my dear mother, how kind, how good you are in thus considering us all—and our various ways of pleasing. But now I may surely look as I please—old or young! Since there is no admiring swain, I may at least enjoy perfect liberty.”

“It is very extraordinary Seymour and Elmour did not come,” said Mrs. Belmont, thoughtfully.—“You may

look surprised, but, upon my credit, I heard them settle their plans for coming here! I did not tell you I thought meeting them perchance would have such a good effect. This place is intolerably dull for you girls: going out boating without gentlemen;—having no one to talk to of the beautiful prospects. I am sometimes quite provoked when I see how handsome you all look, that there should be such a blaze of sparkling eyes and blooming cheeks, when there is no one even present that could report handsome things of you. I wish Belmont would leave this savage place. I declare I will go this moment and tease him. But mind, not a word of my real motive;—if he suspects I had an idea of meeting Seymour and Elmour here, he would soon *let the cat out of the bag!*”

CHAPTER IV.

“ Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dress’d,
Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin new reap’d
Show’d like a stubble land at harvest home.
He was perfum’d like a milliner ;
And ’twixt his finger and his thumb, he held
A pouncet box, which ever and anon
He gave his nose, and took’t away again ;
Who therewith angry, when it next came there,
Took it in snuff. And still he smiled and talked.”

Mrs. BELMONT, at length, gained her point ; her husband, no longer able to resist her intreaties, took his family to Miltown-Malby, on the western coast. They set up at a fashionable hotel resorted to by the gay world, the spirit of which was supported by Sir Offingdon Wilmot, a wealthy baronet.

This hotel was within half a mile of Sea View, Sir Offingdon’s residence ; and was given by him, ready furnished, and

set out at all points, to an old servant, on the most moderate terms. The baronet saw a great deal of company, and found his advantage in having good stabling contiguous to his dwelling.

His society was much sought after, particularly at the hotel, where he contributed largely to the entertainment; supplying them constantly with venison, fruit, and game. He courted the favour of the ladies, by allowing them the command of his carriages; and giving magnificent entertainments, dinners, balls, *fête-champêtres*, &c. But although he thus sought the favour of those distinguished either by beauty or rank, his attentions never amounted to more than merely an acknowledgment that he considered them as objects worthy of displaying his grandeur; for his character was so well known, that mothers, the most anxious to dispose of their daughters, never sought him; but Mrs. Belmont's motto, was *Na bie*

emboura,* and she proposed him to Jemima, her eldest daughter, as a rival to Colonel Elmour. Jemima laughed, and could not for some time suppose her mother serious. In vain she represented his coolness to the fair sex, and that never having, even in his younger days, been softened towards them, surely now, when arrived at the grand climacteric, the vainest could not expect to inspire him with *la belle passion*; and he never could, she acknowledged, rival, in her estimation, the young gallant Colonel Elmour.

“ Ridiculous, child! Colonel Elmour does not think of you; and if he did, he is only a soldier of fortune—could make no settlement—give you no estate to take views from. Oh dear! would it not be a pity your talent should be thrown away? What beautiful drawings you will send me from Sea View; besides,

* *Irish*.—Never despair.

bathing is so good for you all, girls, we shall pay you a visit every Summer !”

“ Dear mother !” returned her eldest daughter, “ how can you talk in such a way ; or hold your daughter so very cheap ? You know—”

“ Stuff, child ! do not let me be tormented with circulating-library sentiment :—consider dull reality ; you are now six-and-twenty ; handsome I will acknowledge ; but you are idle and extravagant. Your poor dear father is certainly not old ; but he has a short neck, and lives full ; great part of his income dies with him ; all then is settled on Watty ; no settlement made on younger children. My father wished to aggrandize my eldest son ; and trust me, my small jointure would go but a little way towards supporting us all. There, my dear child, is the truth—you are old enough to choose your own path, and to profit by my anxiety for you. So no more airs ! come to my room when you

are dressed, which I desire may not be so plain as usual—the more showy the better. You shall wear my garnets, which are particularly becoming to your fair skin !”

She then left the room, leaving Jemima mortified and humbled. Whilst her mother was setting her off for Colonel Elmour, the duplicity was only her mother's ; she giddily joined in all the plans, from feeling a decided preference towards him, and had not delicacy of mind sufficient to feel the mortification of seeking, instead of being sought. She liked him ; felt flattered by his evident admiration ; and thought she would be most fortunate if she gained him, and thus escape the disagreeable men her mother was continually proposing to her as *good catches*.

When the dinner bell rung, Mrs. Belmont lectured her daughters to take care and be among the first to enter the eating room. “ I shall, my dears, seat

myself near the door, in order to be ready, and not let Mrs. Any-body or Mrs. Every-body in before us : keep as near as possible : we give way only to rank. These matters, you will tell me, are trifles ; but, my dears, you should not consider them as such ; the sum of life is made up of small matters ; and here, every one is supposed to know their own place. As we are all strangers to each other, expect no compliment : if we take our place in the back ground, there we may be left. You know, Anne, dear, my little poetess—

“ Full many a flower is born to blush unseen.”

“ I do not think, madam, any one can say that of your daughters,” said Mr. Belmont ; as he came to see if they were ready to accompany him to the drawing-room.

Almost all the company were assembled. The entrance of three such beautiful women caused no small sensation.

The eldest was splendidly dressed ; her raven hair was braided smoothly, and confined at the top of her head by a small circle of blush roses, that set off the transparent fairness of her skin to admiration ; her figure was tall and majestic, and rather inclined to *en bon point*.

Mrs. Belmont looked round her with secret satisfaction, on seeing her daughters were by far the handsomest and the best dressed women in the room.

Sir Offingdon Wilmot next made his *entrée*, and having a slight acquaintance with Mr. Belmont, was presented by him to his wife and daughters.

Dinner being announced, Mrs. Belmont found her precautions useless ; all had their appointed places at the table ; the last comers always sat at the lower end : but the baronet's seat being likewise at the bottom of the table, it required little manœuvring in Mrs. Belmont to place him between her and Jemima.

Dinner time was not the favourable hour for engaging Sir Offingdon's attention ; at least until the cloth was removed. In the mean time, poor Mrs. Belmont was nervous and restless, from her anxiety to observe what impression her daughter would make, and was in despair lest the very excellent dinner would entirely occupy him.

She contrived at length to draw him into conversation ; and having studied his character, talked on those subjects on which she knew his vanity could most easily be flattered : her daughter was scarcely noticed by either, unless, sometimes her memory failed, and then—she applied to Jemima.

Sir Offingdon appeared much pleased with Mrs. Belmont ; and had more conversation with her than with any lady at the hotel ; it was not, therefore, surprising, that he should offer her the command of his carriages, horses, &c.

The acquaintance thus began, rapidly

increased to intimacy ; there was a blunt simplicity in Mrs. Belmont's manner, and a kind of clumsy artifice, that led persons almost to fancy they had her in the palace of truth (as described by Madame de Genlis,) and heard her declare—‘ I will be very artful, no one will discover me ; I will pretend so and so.’ This amused the baronet ; he was diverted at her little plans to attract his attention towards her daughter : whilst, at the same time he endured them, he could not help thinking, with all her vulgarity and simplicity, that she had a great deal of discernment, though her admiration of himself he thought real, and her deepest strokes of adulation, appeared to him to proceed only from her unfeigned approbation ; sometimes, therefore, from motives of gratitude, he was as gallant as she could wish ; feeling himself bound in common civility to make some return for her courtesy ; but through her daughter only

would she receive any, which led Sir Offingdon to be more attentive to her, and to break through his general rule of not being particular to unmarried ladies.

This change in his conduct caused a sensation in the hotel; their flirtation, as it was called, became the general topic of conversation. "Who would imagine," said one lady to another, "at his time of life he would be such a fool as to be drawn in by the match-making Mrs. Belmont; let him beware 'when an old bachelor marries a young wife!'"

"Marries! surely you do not think he will carry the farce so far."

"Consider whom he has to deal with, and that this is the first time in his life of his being in such a dilemma. He will not know how to extricate himself. He never, until now, paid a lady the smallest attention, but what was perfectly general. Now he drives the Belmonts to Sea View. Mrs. Belmont said

to him— “ You may just come with us, and show *Jem.* what view you wish to have taken.”

At length their marriage was publicly spoken of. Mr. Farrel, the master of the hotel, told him of the report in circulation. Sir Offingdon was in the deepest amaze, and said, he was not at all aware of showing any preference to the young lady that could give rise to such a report ; or induce her friends to form such a notion. “ He cared,” he said, “ very little about it ; the Belmonts would deserve the disappointment for their egregious vanity in pretending to him. If he were to marry, he fancied he could match himself more eligibly than with Belmont’s daughter.”

Thus ended the conversation, leaving him doubly inflated with vanity, and resolving to punish Mrs. Belmont’s assurance by neglect.

The punishment fell heaviest on himself. He was now so accustomed to

Mrs. Belmont's flattery, to Miss Belmont's superior conversation, rendered to him delightful by her mother's always leading to such subjects as were most interesting to him; that he felt as if not knowing what to do with himself; uncomfortable, and alone in a crowd of company. The gentlemen would not be at the trouble of attending to him; as to the ladies, the sensible and well-informed kept him at a distance; and those whose society he used to appreciate, appeared now light and trifling. Miss Belmont had mixed in the highest circles, had acquired good tact, and gave importance to every subject she conversed on.

Just at this juncture, Colonel Elmour arrived, and was more devoted than ever to Miss Belmont. Mrs. Belmont was seriously alarmed, and at a loss how to act; not daring absolutely to forbid the Colonel's attentions, as she was not secure of Sir Offingdon, and saw, with grief, he felt no emotion of jealousy.

In despair, and unable to restrain her vexation, she thought she might venture to tell Sir Offingdon how shocked she was at their mentioning her daughter's name with Colonel Elmour. The baronet was sitting at the upper end of the room, no one near him: she was almost tempted then to pour forth her uneasiness; but fearing the company would observe her, deferred it until they should be quite alone. She thought he looked grave, and wondered he did not come as usual to speak to her.

Sir Offingdon retired very early, and sent for Mr. Farrel, to make arrangements for his departure the next day.

Mr. Farrel was ready to hang himself when he found the communication he had made likely to send away his patron. He ventured to expostulate, knowing well the weak side of the character he had to deal with; representing how unfortunate it was that he should relax in his attentions to Miss

Belmont, on the very day of Colonel Elmour's arrival; who flirted so much with her, that every one supposed she had discarded Sir Offingdon. "Even the servants, sir, are whispering among themselves; I heard them. One of them, said to me, as I came up—'See how Sir Offingdon went to bed in dudgeon, because the colonel has taken his love!'"

"Who is this Colonel Elmour?" inquired the baronet; who, so far from feeling jealous, did not even know he was of the party.

However, on this representation, feeling his vanity severely wounded, he gave up his present intention of leaving the hotel; and returned to the drawing room, to show he was still more highly favoured by Miss Belmont than this votary of Mars.

Miss Belmont was so situated on his return, that he could not approach her. He contemplated her at a distance, and never before thought her so handsome,

or so strikingly elegant; he could not but reflect, how dazzlingly beautiful his family diamonds would look in her dark glossy hair; and that unless he were to marry, he had no way of showing them:—if a man were to make such a fool of himself, she would be a sufficient apology. He felt a strong curiosity to know the subject of their conversation, and drew nearer for the purpose of overhearing it. Mrs. Belmont had been observing him for some time, and took care to lead her daughter to say what she knew would please him most. They were talking of the beauties of Sea View. Jemima's admiration of it was unfeigned; and she was eloquently describing its scenery to her lover. The baronet continued to observe her in silence, entertaining thoughts more favourable to Mrs. Belmont's views than he had done hitherto. Supper being announced, he led Jemima out, and sat next her: their conversation was

more animated than usual, and he absolutely attempted to talk sentimentally.

His rest that night was disturbed: sometimes he dreamed he was married; and that his beauteous fair one was transformed into a large masculine woman, disputing with him the government of the servants, and the management of the house: again his disturbed fancy pictured his wife a fine lady, who would not condescend to look after the housemaids; consequently, they had neglected the paper bags he had ordered to be kept by the head of every bed, in which the loose feathers were deposited. From this inattention, they were flying about in all directions, and in shaking them off, and roaring to the housemaid, he awoke from his feverish slumber. His mind continued the entire day, in a state scarcely less distracted. He considered Jemima a prize worth contending for; and that it would be very humiliating to have it said, he

was deserted for Colonel Elmour. He knew she could bring him no fortune, as her father's income was not large: but her having been so early trained to make a great show on small means, would compensate for that; and according to the calculation of Molière's Miser, he might fairly estimate her portion at ten thousand pounds.

Mrs. Belmont's entrance interrupted this reverie. Delighted at finding him alone, she drew a chair near his: and seating herself, pointed to where her daughter and the colonel were walking. —“Look at them! Is it not enough to break a poor mother's heart?—he is going with her to the parade. I am glad they are all out of the room, and that I have you to myself.—Well—I am in such trouble!—My poor dear Belmont encourages Elmour; or else we would soon dismiss him. A daughter of mine shall never marry in the army. Poor *Jem.* is bored to death, and does not

know how to get rid of him!—To tell you the truth, last Winter, in Dublin, the poor child, to please her father, received his courtship more favourably ; —but now, he is odious to her ! Now that the poor girl has seen somebody, all others are indifferent to her. But what fretted us most is—shall I tell you ? —that they say she does not care a straw for Sir Offingdon, and has turned jilt for Colonel Elmour's sake."

" Good heavens, madam ! what do you tell me ? Surely no one presumes to make so free with my name, or with your fair daughter's ?"

" It is too true ! They say she will not speak a word to you since the dashing young colonel came ! Oh ! it's a shame !—if my child's heart was known, she does not think Elmour worthy to be compared to you ! Well, well,—his assurance !—he would not allow her to finish the picture she was drawing of your favourite view ; and he was mad,

jealous, at her undertaking it.—But the poor child, in despite of him, is trying to finish it; and was seeking all the morning some one to take her there, as the sketch was not completed to her fancy. Elmour, indeed, offered his services, and wants to drive her there in his tilbury; but a pretty picture she would make of it with him,—he would not be satisfied unless he were made the prominent figure!—and all your beautiful prospects would serve him as back ground! Oh! he will boast of your riches and grandeur, and of what a clever looking man you are,—only to let the world see how he has triumphed!—Pitiful fellow!”

Sir Offingdon listened with the profoundest attention; and was as sensitive, as Mrs. Belmont could wish to the mortification of such reports: and, in consequence of the conversation he had with Farrel, believed every word she uttered.

“My dear madam! do not take me so much to heart.—I should be sorry indeed the view was not finished, to match the one your charming daughter has already drawn for me. I never beheld one more correctly sketched. I shall have an engraving taken from it. Can you not, my dearest madam! come with her in my carriage? Do you think we are too much talked of?”

“I might almost venture—perhaps we should meet no one.—Poor dear Belmont would be in a rage if we huffed the colonel!”

The next morning Sir Offingdon went with Miss Belmont and her mother, in his barouche, to Sea View. They remained there all the morning; and never thought of time until the sketch was finished: when, to their amazement, they found it was long past the dinner hour.—They hurried into the barouche, and drove to the hotel as fast as possible; hoping Mr. Farrel would keep

back dinner; he did so as long as possible; yet, by the time they arrived, the company had all sat down to dinner.

Mr. Belmont received them on the steps of the hall door. He was seriously displeased with his wife and daughter, which, even to the baronet, was very evident. He hurried them into the dinner room, and obliged them to sit down without dressing; and took his daughter's seat next Sir Offingdon, placing her on his other side, next Colonel Elmour.

Sir Offingdon was highly piqued at this; he considered himself an object of curiosity to the whole company; and that, from Mr. Belmont's manner, they would suppose he was rejected in favour of Colonel Elmour; in whose eye he saw lurking a secret triumph, as if certain of his prize. He felt, likewise, for the unpleasant predicament the ladies were in; and was much shocked, when he perceived Mrs. Belmont ate no dinner,

looking frightened and humbled. For the first time in his life he acted from the impulse of the moment. In a soft whisper, he begged of her to cheer up ; expressing his hopes, that when he should solicit her daughter's leave to explain himself to Mr. Belmont, all would turn out to their satisfaction.

Mrs. Belmont felt her face and neck crimson with pleasure: she could scarcely conceal her emotion; and softly whispered in return, that he made her the happiest of women! She thought the ladies would never leave the dinner room; and when the wished-for signal was made, she took Miss Belmont upstairs to her own apartment, told her what had passed, and that she might expect to receive the baronet's addresses.

Jemima believed this scarcely possible, considering herself a very secondary object with Sir Offingdon; seeing he was drawn to their society by the very gross flattery her mother constantly

dosed him with; this species of gratification, she supposed, would never carry him further than politeness required; and by treating him with gentleness, she hoped to please her mother, and gain her cheerful acquiescence to her marriage with Colonel Elmour. He had proposed himself; but she knew, whilst there was a probability of her attaching a wealthy baronet, she would be furious at her thinking of another. At length, when convinced her mother was serious, and that Sir Offingdon would declare himself, she was overwhelmed with affliction; the poor girl burst into tears, and knew not what to say.

Mrs. Belmont was enraged. “Ungrateful girl! is it thus you receive the tidings of your good fortune?—But, I see how it is—you may do as you please; but you shall never marry Elmour, that’s flat!—No, no, you shall be my Lady Wilmot—or no daughter of mine!

Take your choice—but are you in your senses, *Jem.*? to behave in this ungrateful manner to your poor mother—and all for what? For one that never asked you to marry him.”

“Oh! he did, mother, and I consented; if yours and my father’s consent could be obtained!”

Mrs. Belmont gasped with passion, terrifying poor Jemima; who was at length obliged to promise obedience to her wishes. Her mother then embraced her, as her darling Lady Wilmot, and drew so many splendid pictures of her future greatness, that she almost succeeded in reconciling her daughter’s mind to the dismissing of the poor colonel.

In the mean time, Sir Offingdon was in a state of the greatest perplexity and perturbation. Thus, in one moment, with scarcely a previous reflection, he had given up his liberty. And what was his inducement?—what was his motive?

He could not readily answer.—Was it because the mother so justly appreciated his merits, that he should give himself to the daughter?—Gifted with beauty and talent, she would not disgrace him at the head of his establishment: but then, no fortune; not even as much as would purchase a diamond necklace.—But there was no retracting; although the reluctance he felt in sharing with her his authority over his establishment was great. However, he was determined she should interfere as little as possible.

On his coming out of the dinner-parlour, Mrs. Belmont sent him to her daughters, who were in the garden; at which Mr. Belmont seemed highly displeased, and was following, when his wife called him back, and before he could remonstrate, she made him acquainted with his daughter's good fortune.

He was very much astonished, as he

always conceived the baronet studied his ease too much ever to admit of a partner; particularly at his time of life, when his habits were all formed. He was equally dazzled with Mrs. Belmont by the splendour of the match, but not so sanguine in his hopes of its conducing to her happiness.

They followed them to the garden. Sir Offingdon seeing them from a distance, came to meet them, leaving Jemima with her sister. He declared himself in very handsome terms to Mr. Belmont, saying he had obtained permission of their lovely daughter to solicit his and Mrs. Belmont's consent to their union; and that he trusted as to settlement, he should be able to meet their wishes.

Thus the match was made, to the astonishment of every one, and equally so to the parties themselves!

Poor Colonel Elmour returned to his regiment, uttering many a philippic against the inconstancy of women.

The whole party left Milltown Malby the next day for Dublin, and were much disappointed on hearing the Listowel's were in Paris. Mrs. Belmont declared she was expiring to communicate her happiness to Lady Elizabeth, and regretted her daughter's nuptials were not honoured by their presence. The ceremony was performed very shortly after their arrival in Dublin.

CHAPTER V.

“Thou art not
A feather, to be stirr'd by every breeze
Of little incident.”

LORD ARDSALLAGH accompanied the Listowels to the Continent ; through his influence Listowel detained Lady Elizabeth there five years. At the end of that period, her brother's presence was necessary in Ireland ; therefore Listowel hoped the infancy of his children being over, he might indulge his wife by returning, on her giving him a solemn promise, that his daughters should be left under the care of a governess, and not brought into public until of a proper age.

About the end of April they returned to Ireland, and landing in Dublin, were

impatient, after so long an absence, to embrace their children, who, with their governess, awaited their arrival in Rutland Square. They found them beautiful and promising; Listowel hoped, as he fondly folded them in his arms, that the interest they must excite in his wife's bosom, would eventually efface that egotism of character which concealed all her fine qualities, and made the unhappiness of his life. He had suffered a great deal, during their residence on the Continent, from her whims and caprices; and had indulged her in every folly, never opposing her, except when he considered his doing so a positive duty.

The Belmonts were amongst the foremost of their visitors, with the Wilmots, who were now at the head of every thing gay and brilliant; Lady Wilmot's wit and beauty was the topic of the day. She rejoiced at the return of the Listowels; Lady Elizabeth had

always been her kind friend. Listowel did not regret this intimacy, although vanity was Lady Wilmot's reigning foible, yet it never led her into any glaring absurdity; she had more talent, and was not so much engaged by trifles.

Listowel hoped, as his wife was now engrossed by a sentimental friendship for Lady Wilmot, she would leave her daughters under the care of a very respectable woman, placed over them by Doctor Berry. He had been equally successful in his recommendation of Mr. Villars (Edward's tutor), who was an excellent scholar, with polished manners; of a calm and steady temper; able 'to clear by patient definition all the mysteries of science,' and in every respect fully competent to the task he had undertaken.

He was highly approved of by Lady Elizabeth, who flattered herself she should be equally fortunate in her choice of a French governess, as it was

far from her intention to leave her daughters in the charge of that good sort of a person, Mrs. Ryan.

Listowel, in vain, urged his strong prepossession against French governesses: the generality of them, he supposed, came over in the suite of English families, as ladies' or children's maids; for he conceived no young person of education and unblemished reputation, would leave her own country to seek a precarious subsistence in a foreign land; that, in consequence, they must, in every essential point, be found miserably deficient. He was resolved, however, since his objection had no weight with Lady Elizabeth, that her character should undergo the strictest investigation.

One was at length found, to whom he could make no ostensible objection; she was about the middle age, and had educated some young ladies of the first fashion. He, however, made one

proviso, that their religious education should be attended to by Mr. Villars, when he returned with Edward in the vacation.

Listowel heard constantly from Mrs. Jackson, of Louisa's improvement. He requested she would, with Mrs. Kelly's assistance, have a school for the poor children on his estate, and endeavour to interest his daughter for them, likewise to make her his almoner. It would, he considered, enlarge her ideas, and strengthen her mind, to be thus early led to reflect how others struggled with adversity; and having it occasionally in her power to relieve their necessities, would prevent her compassion from degenerating into mere sentiment. He wished her to feel the pleasure that springs from benevolence, whilst the consciousness of being only a deputy, would guard her vanity.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Impute it not a crime
To me, or to my swift passage that I slide
O'er sixteen years, and leave the growth untried
Of that wide gap.

“ Your patience this allowing
I turn my glass ; and give my scene such growing
As you had slept between.”

WHEN Mary Listowel had attained her sixteenth year, her mother sent her to petition Captain Listowel for permission to accompany them on their visit to Sea View ; urging, that as she was to be presented the following Winter, he might now indulge her without departing very far from his determination, of not allowing her to appear in public before that period.

He granted her request, thinking it would be a fair opportunity of studying

her character ; as the system of education he had adopted debarred him almost entirely from the presence of his children. Lady Elizabeth's accepting this invitation afforded him great satisfaction : the Wilmots had often invited her ; and he believed she could not now have conquered her repugnance to going so far South, but that Listowel Park had not been lately mentioned ; she therefore yielded to her friend Lady Wilmot's earnest entreaties, to assist her in laying out, at Sea View, a garden in the Italian manner.

They reached Sea View early on the day appointed ; the Belmonts were there, and no other company expected until the following week.

It was about the middle of June, the weather delightful : they walked about the grounds until dinner time, and were charmed with the beauty of the place, which was then at its height.

It is not uncommon to see the pro-

prietors of beautiful places, fine houses, &c. insensible to the beneficence of their Creator in thus distinguishing them; or else, by untoward circumstances debarred from enjoying them; affording their neighbours a melancholy lesson, of how very inadequate every thing in this sublunary world is to bestow happiness.

This was not the case with Sir Offingdon Wilmot and his lady: they were ever alive to the pleasures of show and ostentation; their watchful eye ran over all—every thing, to see that all was suitable—all shown off to the best advantage.

Captain Listowel could scarcely forbear smiling; he was of a lively disposition, and had rather a turn for satire; but too polite to make his host the object of ridicule, and too benevolent not to compassionate his foibles, he regretted that one who had so much in his power, should thus waste his energy on

trifles, making them the business of his life. As to Lady Wilmot, her character was still a riddle to him ; vanity, he saw, was likewise her reigning foible ; but then, hers was not engrossing, its influence not unbounded ; and, although she attended to what was trifling more than to what was necessary, yet her deportment was dignified. To suit the baronet's taste she dressed magnificently ; it became her best, as hers was a face and form that shone more in public circles than in private life.

Conscious that her husband's mind was uncultivated, she constantly endeavoured to lead the conversation to subjects on which he was best informed. He felt the advantage of this, sensible of never having before appeared so respectable, and allowed her unbounded influence, such as a strong mind always obtains over a weak. In short, she was the real spring of all his actions, which she carefully concealed, and never inter-

ferred with his management of the household, or with any of his fancies in matters of trifling import.

The next day was occupied in driving over the grounds. Listowel was happy to indulge the vanity of his host by expressing his great admiration. But of all the admirers of his place, none gave him such exquisite pleasure as the innocent Mary, who expressed her delight with the enthusiasm natural to her age; she was blithe as a bird just escaped from its cage: her light airy form was set off by her riding dress. Mounted on a handsome palfrey, her father's gift, she rode with her brother and Mr. Villars, to whose care she was strongly recommended. Her father entreated he would endeavour to keep her buoyant spirits within bounds. "You may observe," said he, "her mother is too much charmed with her to see she has a fault: she thinks all her extravagancies wit and humour—indications of genius; and

is indignant at the idea of their proceeding from mere animal spirits and childishness."

Mr. Villars promised to exert all his influence. There could not have been a more troublesome task assigned him; and the first specimen she gave disheartened him not a little.

On their setting out he had requested permission to ride by her, "as," he said, "her horse might prove unmanageable among so many strange ones."

She laughed:—"Oh! my good sir, do not fear my horse. You know papa would not set me on one that was not as gentle as possible. But pray confess, do you not fear the rider will require management?—and gallantly try to conceal the leading strings you intend to restrain me with?"

"Well, since you will have the truth," said Villars, "your father requested I would attend you; but, if you have any objection, I will give up my dele-

gated trust to any one you think more eligible, provided you make a discreet choice. Who will you have? Shall I send Sir Offingdon?"

"Oh, no! I appoint you," said Mary, "my true knight. You have more common sense, which you know is what I want. As to the beauties of this place, words are not wanted; it is fairy land, and we have only to look around to be enchanted."

"I see you are an enthusiastic admirer of nature," returned Villars. "Have you never seen Listowel Park? It is within two or three miles of Killarney, and from it there is most beautiful mountain scenery, far superior to what you see here; this is but a tame view in comparison."

"I hope my papa will take us there," replied Mary.

"I am sure he would, but your mother, I fear, would think it too retired," observed Villars.

“ We may bring a party with us ; and then I am certain mamma will not refuse me.”

They were now joined by the two Miss Belmonts, Sir Offingdon, and Listowel.

Mary was the life of the party ; her artless expressions of unfeigned admiration attracted Lady Wilmot’s attention : she asked her if she had been at Killarney, saying—“ There, indeed, nature is to be seen in her most romantic garb.”

Mary replied she never had. Mr. Listowel said business required his presence at Listowel Park, and that if she pleased she might accompany him.

“ How could you think of Mary’s accompanying you, Mr. Listowel ?” said Lady Elizabeth. “ She is yet too young to leave me. You know I am afraid of the water, and have such a dislike to boating parties ; some accident frequently occurs ; and then there is generally a great

mist; and those mountains attract the rain."

"The weather is now so fine, mamma," rejoined Mary, "that there would be no danger of cold; and we might have our party so large as to secure your having society in your morning drives, independent of us that love boating. I am sure Edward will think with me."

Edward then rode up to the carriage, and was delighted with the party proposed. Lady Elizabeth could not refuse her children, and at length it was arranged that Mr. Listowel should go there the next day, with his son and Mr. Villars, to have their mansion house prepared to receive, on the following week, the party then assembled at Sir Offingdon's.

Mary was in great spirits. "They were all," she said, "indebted to her for the idea of this visit." She laughed, and chatted, and galloped, until poor

Mr. Villars was quite oppressed with fatigue and alarm. At length, to his great satisfaction, Sir Offington requested they would return, and make their toilette for dinner.

CHAPTER VII.

“What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace,—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne’er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E’en the slight hare-bell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread :
What though upon her speech there hung,
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear.”

At a very early hour on the following morning, the gentlemen set out on their expedition, and arrived late in the evening at Listowel park. It was Edward’s first visit. The beauty of the winding approach enchanted him, sometimes appearing as if cut through rock; and then dark groves opening, as if to display a magnificent chain of mountains.

Leaving their horses with their servants, they went in at the hall door, which stood open. Listowel led the way to Mrs. Jackson's parlour, where the worthy couple were sitting. Surprised and pleased at the arrival of Mr. Listowel and his son, Mr. Jackson felt an honest pride in thinking his employer would now be sensible of the strenuous efforts he had made in his service; Mrs. Jackson likewise felt some pride in Louisa, whom she thought a paragon of perfection.

The evening being dark, the travellers did not immediately perceive a young person who presided at the tea table; she appeared retiring from observation; and putting on her bonnet, that lay on a chair beside her, murmured a soft good night to Mrs. Jackson, and was stealing out of the room, when Mr. Jackson hastily bade her return.

“My dear Miss Louisa, wait a moment, and I will be ready to attend you.”

Listowel was looking out of the window, admiring the serenity of the evening, not conscious of her presence until he heard the name Louisa uttered; he started! and turning round, exclaimed—
“Is it possible?”

She had her back to him, and did not hear his exclamation, or observe his emotion; or how much she was the object of his scrutiny.

Mr. Villars only observed him, and for an instant supposed he had seen something from the window that caused him surprise. In a moment he discovered his mistake; and saw the fair object of his exclamation, speaking to Mr. Jackson in the softest, sweetest voice he had ever heard; but strongly tinged with the Kerry accent. She seemed expostulating: he overheard her say—
“There is not the least occasion, my dear sir, for your taking such trouble; John and Judy are below; they will take care of me for this short dis-

tance." She then whispered in a lower tone — "I would not, for the world, take you from your guests."

Still Mr. Listowel stood like one transfixed; but when the young person went towards the door, he stepped before her, and holding the lock, said, in an agitated and hurried manner—"I very much fear, madam, we are unfortunately the cause of your returning at this late hour; and I request we may not put you to any inconvenience."

She started, surprised at his earnestness; but quickly recovering her self-possession, thanked him for his attention; assuring him she sometimes returned at that hour to the Glebe, the distance being only half a mile.

Edward now shared in Mr. Villars' surprise, which considerably increased by what followed.

"Yes," returned Listowel, "half a mile only; but it is a lonely way, and the night looks lowering; you must

allow me to form part of your escort, and assist John and Judy in protecting you over the mountains."

"You are indeed," replied Louisa, "very considerate, and very charitable to take a stranger's ease of mind so much to heart. I certainly have never passed the mountain at this late hour alone; but others have; therefore I should reproach myself if I indulged in foolish fear, and were the cause of your being so long in the night air after a journey."

This was spoken in an earnest, timid manner; her reluctance to give trouble conquering her usual bashfulness.

Listowel seemed irresolute, he had taken her hand, which he held, while his own trembled. To let her go unprotected he found impossible; yet he feared betraying his anxiety, should he insist on accompanying her; and was much relieved when Mr. Villars offered his services.

Listowel thanked him, observing, with a careless air, that as he was the cause of the young lady's returning, he felt himself answerable for her safety.

Mr. Jackson went through the ceremony of introduction; saying, she was a relation of his worthy friend, the curate; and that he was proud to add, she was his wife's pupil.

Louisa withdrew, accompanied by Edward and Mr. Villars; she inquired for her guides, John and Judy, but was told they had gone an hour before: on which Louisa observed, timidly addressing her companions—"I now fully feel the value of your politeness, since I find my father's servants have returned home without me. The beauty of the walk would, if the evening were not unfortunately so far advanced, make some amends for your being detained." This was said in a low voice; her head hung down as if from bashfulness, her large bonnet completely shading her face.

Her companions each offered her an arm, which she modestly declined. The path they had taken was now shaded by trees, which increasing the darkness, Villars and Edward could not conceal their apprehensions that she had taken the wrong path, as she led them by the side of a hill, and was descending into a deep vale.

On perceiving their uneasiness, she assured them with cheerfulness of manner, that she knew the way perfectly well; and that in the whole country, they could not have a more experienced guide, as she went that path two or three times every week for the last ten years.

“Ten years!” repeated Edward; “I did not suppose our guide had been so sage in years: from your voice I should suppose you in first youth.”

“Oh!” replied she, “can you not see that my height is beyond that? But the night is growing uncommonly dark;

in day-light you will see a most beautiful view from this path."

Mr. Villars now made some inquiry for Mr. Kelly. "It is some years since I visited him: then he had no child; yet, as you observe, your height proclaims you to have been longer in the world."

"It does," replied she; "I call him father, and obey him as such; for I know no other—but, he is only my relation; and I do not know within what degree of affinity: but I love him beyond any one in the world."

The path here became so very rugged and uneven, that Edward prevailed on her to take his arm.

The tones of her voice were rich and harmonious; but still she had the Kerry accent very strong. Edward wondered why he listened to her with so much interest, and was not disgusted with the vulgarity of her voice, which corresponded so ill with her expressions, and the modest ease of her manners.

At length they arrived at the Glebe : it was so late, Villars and his young friend refused her invitation to enter, but accepted her offer of a guide, and taking leave, requested permission to visit her the next day.

The gentlemen sending their guide on a little way before, gave a loose to their astonishment. “Who can she be?” inquired Edward. “My father was agitated ;—and yet they appeared perfect strangers.”

“He did not even appear to know her by name, until Mr. Jackson presented her,” returned Villars.

“Yes,” replied his pupil; “I am certain they are unacquainted with each other; she denied a previous knowledge of him; and her manners are perfectly artless and unaffected. She spoke of his care and attention with gratitude; observing how very kind-hearted he must be to feel so much for a stranger.”

“You had this conversation, I sup-

pose, when she accepted your arm, and walked on before me ?”

“ Yes,” replied Edward ; “ the path became rugged : I told her I should ill obey my father’s injunction, did I not assist her with my arm. She laughingly accepted it ; saying she would be sorry to make me guilty of the sin of disobedience. I long to see her ; I am sure she is very charming and young, although she has been ten years walking the mountains alone.”

On their return, they found Listowel with Mr. Jackson ; the former, they observed, looked anxious and inquiring : however, they did not indulge his curiosity by any remark, except on the darkness of the night ; when, taking their candles, they retired for the night.

CHAPTER VIII.

I enter thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haidee,
Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.

BYRON.

LOUISA, on leaving the gentlemen, ran into the little parlour, where she found the good curate at his usual evening's occupation. He was amazed at her return at that late hour; but all alarm was quickly dispelled, by the pleased and gay expression of her open countenance.

“My dear child!” said he, embracing her; “what brings you home at this late hour, and alone? Have you and my worthy friend, Mrs. Jackson, had a boxing match?—and has she turned you out?”

“No, my dear sir; we were as peaceable as ever; but three gentlemen arrived, the owners of the house, and I was obliged to make way for them.” She then explained all she knew of the matter, dwelling very much on the kindness of the elder gentleman, and concluded with saying—“she had never met with such pleasant good natured men. But to-morrow, papa, you shall judge for yourself, they will call here; two of them know you, I think, at least Mr. Villars said so. The young man they called Edward; I liked him very much, he seemed so gentle, so pleasant; I long for to-morrow, to see if he is handsome.”

She then kissing her father, gaily bid him good night, and went to her chamber.

He sat for some time absorbed in thought, looking still on the direction she had passed: he admired, he rejoiced in her lively spirits, and returned thanks

to heaven for sending them, in their old age, such a cheering companion. Yet he was often oppressed with melancholy reflections, when he considered she must be near sixteen, and that now, if ever, her parents would claim her: her manners were so attaching, it would be like parting with life to resign her; particularly, as her father acknowledged her mother was a vain, silly woman; he felt how dreadful to him and Mrs. Kelly, would be the necessity of giving up the comfort of their age, to such guidance: so innocent and so inexperienced, might she not, from novelty and example adopt every folly?—and from the volatility of her disposition, might she not be entangled in a labyrinth of dissipation? “Oh, my child! I must pray for you, and carefully instruct you in your religious and moral duties!” He sighed heavily, and these melancholy reflections unfitting him for study, he retired to rest at an earlier hour than usual.

Louisa rose with the dawn, as blithe as a bird; her dreams had been enchanting; she thought she had been in a handsome pleasure-boat on the lake of Killarney; and that the three gentlemen she had met the preceding evening were in it; but, unfortunately, the two that she felt most interested in, wore masks.

She dressed herself very carefully, and begged the key of the rector's bed-chamber, to comb up her beautiful raven tresses at the only looking-glass in the house. Every one she thought unusually late this morning. The strangers were not mentioned; except in accounting to Mrs. Kelly for Louisa's return.

At two o'clock, Edward and Mr. Villars came; the latter renewed his acquaintance with the curate; and presenting his pupil to him, politely inquired for the young lady they had escorted over the mountain.

Mr. Kelly smiled; and said, if they walked into the garden, they would

find her with his good woman. He led the way; Mrs. Kelly, from a distance, saw their approach, and advancing to meet them, said, she supposed she was addressing the gentlemen who had been so kind to her dear child: and added, she hoped for the pleasure of their company in the summer-house, where she had prepared strawberries and cream.

They were going to refuse, until they saw a lady seated in the arbour, who arose on their approach, and said something, in a low voice, on being presented to them. They still could not see her face, it was concealed by a large bonnet: she was of the tall middle size, dressed in a russet-brown stuff, neatly fitted to her shape; the symmetry of her form so perfect, that even in this coarse attire she could not pass unobserved.

Edward tried to lead her into conversation; he spoke of the beauty of

the walk they had just come, and the fine view from Listowel Park ; which he said far surpassed in richness and beauty any he had ever beheld. He remarked what a beautiful lake there was at the west end of the house. “ I think,” said he, “ it is worthy of a boat ; I hope to procure one at Killarney.”

At this happy hearing, Louisa held up her head, forgetting her shyness, and throwing back the beautiful glossy ringlets that shaded her eyes, said—“ I have often thought how charming a boat would be on that lake ; it is so retired and tranquil, fringed by those graceful trees ; it irresistibly engages attention, notwithstanding the grand objects near it.”

He smiled at her eagerness, and almost started on beholding her countenance ; he thought he had never seen any one so beautiful. She did not perceive his earnest gaze, until his silence

made her look towards him, and blush deeply on finding herself the object of his attention.

Mr. Villars now joined them; the conversation became general: neither of the gentlemen could take their eyes from Louisa, who was greatly relieved by her mother sending her to pull flowers.

In this occupation she quickly forgot her embarrassment; and presently presented each of the gentlemen with a nosegay.

“How comes it, my dear,” said her mother, “that you reserve the most beautiful flowers for yourself?”

“This nosegay is not for myself,” said she, colouring.

“Well, my dear, who is it for?”

She looked at Edward, and said, hesitatingly—“I hope you will have the goodness to give these flowers to the gentleman who was so considerate for me last night. They are from my own garden, and I think the finest

I have seen this season; otherwise I would not offer them."

Edward, much surprised, received the *bouquet*, and with a gravity and earnestness of manner, unaccountable to Louisa, inquired if she had seen his father previous to their interview of yesterday evening. On her replying in the negative, he looked significantly at Mr. Villars, who had risen to depart. Having wished the ladies a good morning, and reminded the curate of his promise to dine with Mr. Listowel, he took his pupil away, lest he should betray further his ungovernable curiosity.

"Did you ever behold such a striking likeness?" observed Edward to Villars, when they were a little distance from the house. "Could you not have imagined Mary was present?"

"I grant you," returned Villars, "there is a strong resemblance; but, allow me to say the comparison is

much in this lady's favour. I admire the grace and dignity of her figure; more striking from meeting it so unexpectedly; and which, notwithstanding the coarseness of her garb, appears so conspicuous: the gracefulness of her motions absolutely fascinated me!"

"Oh! is it so? You have," said Edward, "fallen in love with this wood nymph. I take it she prefers me; but I am afraid my father will rival us both!"

"For Heaven's sake, Edward, do not set your affections on her!—I strongly suspect it would in you be criminal."

"What is it you tell me? Where does your imagination lead you? Have you any reason for this? Can you a tale unfold—the very suspicion of which freezes my young blood? Do speak!"

"I fear I have said too much! I have not the least reason—but conjecture only;—your father's agitation last night!—her striking likeness to your sister!—

and still more to your father!—and her preferring you both so much to me! and then—”

“ Oh! you may stop,” returned Edward; “ now I see all: you have taken a mountain off my breast; you think nothing but a miracle could make her pass you over. You will find the ladies in general acknowledge us to be prettier fellows; as to the likeness, I allow it is extraordinary; but sometimes nature will play these pranks. They say men and their wives are very like;—now I am very like my father, *ergo* she must be like me—and, perhaps, was sent down from heaven to be my wife!”

“ Well, say so to your father, and see if he will object,” replied Villars.

“ Oh! it is impossible! she appears younger than I am; and my father was always a moral man.”

Listowel came to meet them: he said he had finished his business, and given every necessary direction for the recep-

tion of the company. He made no inquiry as to their visit, but his manner was hurried and anxious: at length he observed the flowers.

“ You look as if you had been at Flora’s court; and have *bouquets* as spruce as any May-boy.”

“ They were presented by Flora herself. Here is one she sent as a small tribute of gratitude to you. Nothing is to be refused from her fair hands,” said Edward.

Listowel held out his hand to receive it, he coloured very deeply.

Edward talked of Louisa’s beauty, declaring, he had never seen so interesting a young creature—

“ Just what youthful poets fancy when they love !”

The high colour on his father’s cheek faded away to an ashy paleness.

“ For shame, Edward !” exclaimed he, “ why talk in such a foolish manner ! This young person is born in the shade.

—It would be highly improper in you to draw her into notice, and make her the gaze of the idle set that are to be here next week.—So, pray, as you dread my displeasure, let me hear no more of her!”

Here they were interrupted: one of the tenants had a word to *spake* to his honour. Edward left them, waiting only to observe the fate of the nosegay; which he saw his father deposit safely in his bosom, and show great care for its preservation. He felt painfully puzzled what to think; considering himself as criminal for entertaining such suspicions. ‘Impossible!’ he said:—‘My father prove to be an immoral man; a finished hypocrite!’ The idea made him shudder: he could not even mention the subject to Villars, although they strolled about together, unpremeditatedly retracing their steps, until they met the curate, who returned with them to dinner.

Listowel did not fear his recognising him, conscious he was so well disguised by the enormous whiskers and large wig he wore on their first and only interview.

CHAPTER IX.

“Thou hast an eye of tender blue,
And thou hast locks of Daphne’s hue,
And cheeks that shame the morning’s break,
And that might for redness make
Roses seem pale beside them.”

THE following day, Listowel and his companions returned at the dinner to Sea View. They found many new arrivals—Lord Ardsallagh, Mrs. Stockdale and her son, Mr. Stockdale, Mr. Talbot, and the young Lord Leethem ; besides a large party engaged to dinner from the hotel at Miltown Malby.

On the return of the gentlemen from the dinner table to the drawing room, Mary, impatient to speak to Villars of Listowel Park, asked him numberless questions ; he endeavoured to give her

every satisfaction : she then told him she had missed him sadly ; that his absence had nearly been of fatal consequences to her, as she had fallen from her horse, the animal whose gentleness she had boasted of: it turned out very spirited, ran away with her several times ; “ and,” added she, with a smile, and blushing deeply ; “ I find I do not know how to manage either myself or my horse without your assistance.”

He laughed, and asked if she intended to appoint him her father confessor, as well as 'squire ;—“ but remember,” said he “ if you appoint me to that office, I shall be very severe ; and your penance for all offences shall be to listen to plain truth.”

“ It will be very salutary. I will bear it all—provided I meet with approbation when I act right ; otherwise, I fear I should quickly relapse into error,” said Mary.

Villars looked very grave.—“ That

principle is dangerous. It is acting well on a wrong motive; and," added he, smiling, "deserves a lecture."

"Not now; when we walk to-morrow," returned his fair pupil, "I will then have pleasure in listening to you; if you will allow me the privilege of defending myself a little."

"That is but fair, and I must be on my guard that you do not make 'the worse appear the better reason;' and that I do not forget my office of censor; and give you too much of this adulation you are so fond of."

Mr. Stockdale here interrupted them, to solicit her to accept him as a partner in the country dance. She turned her beautiful eyes, with a beseeching look, to Mr. Villars, to claim her as his partner; who not choosing to understand the hint, turned away; saying, he was happy to leave her in such good hands. She reddened with vexation; and Mr. Stockdale had to address her again be-

fore she answered; when, giving him her hand, they joined the set.

Mr. Villars was surprised not to see Edward among the dancers; who, he at length found sitting by himself, looking very melancholy, at the lower end of the room. Talbot joined them; they rallied Edward on his gravity; representing his want of gallantry in allowing Miss Belmont to remain a wall-flower. He pleaded a head-ache, and retorted, that such idle men as they were had no right to censure him.

Talbot declared he had intended asking Miss Listowel; but imagined, from her long conversation with Villars, she was pre-engaged. “Pray,” said he, addressing himself to Edward, “did you, in your late excursion, call at the Glebe?—and did you see a young person there the very image of your sister?”

This was the very subject torturing poor Edward’s brain, and which filled him with such melancholy ideas; he

could not bear to have it mentioned, and to avoid further discussion, replied rather abruptly: and at that moment seeing the youngest Miss Belmont disengaged, said, lest he should incur her mother's discipline, he had better lead her to the dance.

Talbot looked after him. "I fear," said he, addressing Villars, "Edward is displeased; yet, I do not know why. I compared his sister to one of the loveliest young persons I ever beheld. Did you see her?—and did you see the likeness?"

"I did; it is indeed most striking!" returned Villars.

"You will allow, however, that the cottage maiden has the advantage."

"Rather say," returned Villars, "Miss Listowel's beauty is of another style; you must admire the symmetry of her pliant slender figure, fairy in proportion; her motions are graceful; and she has great play of feature."

“ She has innocency and vivacity in her countenance, and the softest blue eyes,” replied Talbot; “ nevertheless, I admire the life and intelligence of my fair recluse (as I call her): there is an appearance of natural refinement about her; a nobleness of soul, with an air of candour; such innocence!—you smile—but is it not so?—In speaking of one,” he added, “ you are irresistibly led to praise the qualities of her mind which gives her that radiance of intellect, that makes one fancy her almost of a superior order of beings. In speaking of Miss Listowel, you admire the cast of her features, so delicate, so regular; and you talk of the magic of her bewitching softness, and innocent vivacity.”

“ If you had not been in such raptures with your recluse, I should,” said Villars, “ pronounce you in love with Miss Listowel.”

“ Oh, no! my adoration is paid to her counterpart,” returned Talbot. “ But

do not look surprised; I have never told my love—love it cannot be called; only a quick perception of rare and admirable qualities; a taste,” said he, laughing, “for the sublime and beautiful! I must tell you, how we became acquainted.

“About six years ago, when I went first to the shooting lodge my father has at Killarney, she was there on a visit, to avoid the young Belmonts, who generally accompanied their father every Summer to the Glebe. They were then wild, riotous youths. My recluse had an antipathy to them; she was then a most lovely child. One day, these same troublesome youths rode over to Killarney, and were walking with her and her young friends; as usual, they began to romp with poor Louisa, that is her name; and in endeavouring to extricate herself from them, her foot slipped, and she was precipitated into a mill-stream. Her

young companions shouted vehemently; but as for assistance they were too bewildered to offer any. Fortunately, I was strolling about with my gun, and hearing their cries, came just in time to save her from being drawn with velocity under the wheel. Though my exertion was trifling, yet it saved her from so horrible a death, that her gratitude knew no bounds: she declared, next to her father, she should always love and reverence me: and accordingly, every year, on my return to the lakes, I am sure to receive some gift, such as a purse wrought by her own hand, a fowling bag, flint case, &c. I tell her she pays me tribute for her life. She has a very good taste for drawing, in which I have occasionally assisted her; and she has had besides the advantage of the best masters, who are drawn to that part of the world by its beautiful scenery: she is allowed to copy some of the very best represen-

tations of art, collected by the late Mr. Listowel, at Listowel Park. I have not seen her these last six months, I hope——”

Here they were interrupted by Mary, who threw herself down on the chair beside them, quite exhausted from dancing; and desired Villars to fan her. He replied, he was not practised in the management of the fan, but that he would do his best to please.

“ Oh! that is all I require; I find so many expert, that your awkwardness will amuse me.”

Lord Leethem here interrupted her, sent by Lady Elizabeth, to desire her to promote a waltzing party; the Miss Belmonts, he said, and other ladies had consented, provided Miss Listowel led the way.

“ An experienced, sage guide they have chosen,” replied Mary, with an arch glance at Villars.

“ They could not,” returned his lord-

ship, "have a better. Who so well understands the intricacies of the figure?—and who moves with such spirit, and such Ariel lightness?"

"You will turn this poor head," said Mary: "half these compliments would answer one so short a time from the strict discipline of the school-room. Pray collect the party."

He obeyed instantly. Mr. Villars then approached her: "I cannot, in conscience," observed he, "after the high honour you paid me the other morning, of appointing me your knight, or your guardian, forbear remonstrating against this dancing-party; I am certain your father would be highly displeased!"

"Is it possible? I must say this is downright caprice.—But I forgive you," returned Mary, "as I know the pleasure of indulging in caprice."

"Is Villars," inquired Talbot, "in the habit of waltzing that you accuse him of caprice?"

“ Oh, no !” replied she, very much diverted at such an idea ; “ still he is capricious : he knows, that the last two years of my life I have had, when in Dublin, a master regularly twice a week, to teach me to waltz, and lectured well, if I did not do my best : well, here I am, not a month since I left my school-room, where, I naturally supposed, I was in training for my appearance in the world ; ready to do my best ; preparing to put my lessons in practice : when this gentleman steps forward, looking even more severe than my governess, saying—“ It is very improper to waltz !”—Now, pray tell me what guide I am to have if my school-room rules fail ?”

“ In your own heart ; in your quick sense of wrong !”

“ Well, perfect obedience shall serve instead of this quick sense of wrong. To tell the truth, which I hope you will not say is naughty, I like the amusement ; and was enjoying the idea

of dancing with Lord Leethem; he is a so much pleasanter partner than my German master."

Lord Leethem now came to lead her out. She smiled, and said, with the greatest composure—"I have changed my mind—your lordship may seek another partner, as I shall not waltz to-night."

"Oh! it is impossible for you to change your mind now; the set are standing up."

"You will easily find another partner," observed Mary.

"Here comes Lady Elizabeth!" exclaimed his lordship; "her cards are laid aside for the purpose of seeing you exhibit. Pray, madam, exert your influence with Miss Listowel; she now refuses to waltz."

Lady Elizabeth dissembled her displeasure, afraid to remonstrate too warmly, lest she should expose her total want of authority; and therefore mildly begged

to know her objection. She could make none, excepting that she did not choose it; and begged her dear mother, if she loved her, not to press it further; but assist Lord Leethem in finding another partner. Her mother seeing it vain to urge the point, desisted; and presently succeeded in procuring his lordship a partner.

Mary turned towards Mr. Villars, with a look of triumph. "Now," said she, "am I not a good child? Indeed you ought to thank me; for if I had mentioned your name to my lady-mother, she would not have forgiven you this month."

"It was, indeed, very generous of you; but I was prepared to support you, if you had applied to me."

"Oh, yes! with grave remarks, and wise saws;—mamma would not have attended to you—you must have listened to her wise remarks; she would have been doubly offended with you,

if they did not prove unanswerable.—My plan is, to say I do not choose it; she can then only call me capricious, and not accuse me of the more heinous crime of pretending to be wiser than herself.”

“ I do not, indeed, approve of your plan of being systematically obstinate,” replied Villars: “ I equally condemn heat in argument, and think gentle intreaty, and fair representation, is what a young person should use when contradicted.”

“ Well,” said Mary, looking at him from under her long eyelashes with the most fascinating softness, and colouring—“ I shall do so with you; but with the rest of the world I must be obstinate, I must be whimsical !” She rose, and went to her mother.

Talbot laughed; tapping Villars, as he appeared absorbed in thought, said—“ It is fortunate for me, it seems, I have this lady’s counterpart, for I see how the land lies here !”

“ You are quite mistaken,” replied Villars; “ perhaps you do not know the situation I hold in this family ?”

“ I know all, and more than you do ! for I see she loves you.”

They now went to the supper-room, and at a late hour separated for the night.

CHAPTER X.

“ So wond’rous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.”

EARLY in the following week, the expected guests assembled at Listowel Park. The younger part of the company generally spent their mornings on the lakes; whilst many, apprehensive of boating, drove out with Lady Elizabeth: sometimes they brought cold provisions, the parties met, and dined under the shade of a spreading tree. All were enchanted with the beauty and sublimity of the surrounding scenery, seldom returning until a late hour.

Listowel’s steps often bent towards the Glebe; but afraid of betraying his secret, he judged it prudent to forego

this gratification, and to defer his visit until the ladies required his attendance, concluding Mrs. Belmont would bring them there, and that, in the sensation caused by Lady Elizabeth's presence, he might pass unobserved.

Poor Louisa, during this time, was confined for air and exercise to the precincts of the garden. Often, whilst indulging melancholy reflections, she would cast an anxious glance over its broad fence of yew and holly, secretly hoping to see the strangers, as she called Mr. Villars and Edward, crossing the mountain-path leading to the Glebe, but to her great mortification they came not. She dared not mention how much they engrossed her thoughts, or how unaccountably they revived recollections of past times; which, from the period of her first coming, had been a forbidden subject of conversation. Mr. Kelly considered she would never pass for his relation, if allowed to talk of

“Mamma’s carriage!” “Mamma’s balls! &c.” and that, if her mind were permitted to dwell on former grandeur, she would, by her innocent prattle, excite the curiosity of his neighbours:—it was her father’s particular request that every thing, previous to their first acquaintance, should be kept secret.

The recollections of former days were in consequence very faint, and would have been quite obliterated, but that Mrs. Kelly, contrary to her husband’s strict injunctions, questioned her; making her relate, on her first coming, all she knew of herself and family. It amounted to very little, consisting merely of descriptions of her fine clothes, and the christian names of her brother, sister, and maid. The surnames of her parents her infant tongue could not pronounce, although she often attempted it: had they mentioned Listowel Park, it would at once have been made known to them, who

she was; but the Kellys, and the persons she saw, were in the habit of styling it 'the Park.' Mr. Listowel had some fears upon the subject, and was happy to learn from Mr. Jackson, that his secret was safe; and that, probably, whilst her articulation remained imperfect, her surname, if not repeated in her hearing, would escape her memory.

Mr. Jackson judged right, all recollections of her early days became very faint, and would have faded away, but for the loquaciousness of Mrs. Kelly's maid-servant, who often amused her, while yet a child, with anecdotes of what she told on her first coming.

Mr. Listowel's manner surprised her; he haunted her imagination; and unaccountably made her dwell on every thing she had heard of her first youth. His voice—even his name—did not seem strange to her ear; although she could not say she had ever heard them

before. To see him again was therefore her first wish; she almost felt convinced, from his evident agitation on seeing her, that she was an object of interest to him, and that consequently he must know her family. Curiosity about them, had been her earliest feeling: Mr. Kelly always evaded her inquiries; and at length, on her becoming more urgent, positively forbid her questioning him further on the subject. He wished her to adopt the opinion of every one in their circle, and suppose herself his relation; but he respected truth too much to make use of equivocation. She was therefore, left to wild conjecture, which naturally increased the romantic turn of her mind.

One morning, as she was sitting with Mrs. Kelly, Edward and Villars were shown into the room: Louisa was in a moment covered with blushes; and showed such innocent pleasure at see-

ing them again, as was very gratifying. The gentlemen entered into conversation on topics they supposed would interest Mrs. Kelly, giving a ludicrous account of their adventures, and excursions to Killarney :—the ladies were highly amused. The conversation next led to the stupidity of servants ; here the good woman of the house was perfectly at home ; and had many anecdotes to tell of Patrick and Biddy. They attended to her with great politeness, particularly Villars, whom she singled out.

When Edward saw her thus engaged, he addressed Louisa, asking her in a low voice, why she had discontinued her rambles to Listowel Park ?

“ The Jacksons have left it for a short time, therefore my visiting there now would be an inexcusable intrusion.”

“ If my mother comes for you, will you, do you think, obtain permission to return with her ?” inquired Edward.

She coloured, and regarding him with pleasure, said, she should be most happy to accompany her. After a pause, she added—"I should then have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Listowel;—is he not still at the Park?"

Edward started.—"Certainly—but why are you so anxious to meet him?"

"It may appear strange to you, who mix so much in the world; but we live so retired.—I have spent so many happy days at the Park, that I naturally wish to see the lord of its soil."

"As another inducement, I have got the boat you wished for on your favourite lake; it is now looking beautiful!" returned Edward.

"How very good this is of you!" exclaimed Louisa. "But, alas! I can only thank you: I am not allowed at present beyond the garden."

"I wish you could come to-morrow," said her brother: "my mother, I am

sure, will be here this evening; perhaps she may prevail upon you?"

Mr. Kelly coming in, the conversation became general; and in about an hour the visitors took their leave.

The younger part of the company from Listowel Park, went that morning to see a stag-hunt; leaving only Mrs. Belmont with Lady Elizabeth. Edward had detained Villars, to assist him in persuading his mother to visit the Glebe, and thought it probable, to amuse her companion, she might consent.

Accordingly, at breakfast Edward proposed they should visit, and invite the Kellys. Her ladyship laughed at the idea of making company of them. Edward assured her Mr. Kelly was a well educated divine, though not versed in courts; and that if she could prevail on Mrs. Kelly to accept her invitation, she would find her an admirable specimen of simple life.

“That might be amusing. Mrs. Belmont, do you know these people?”

“*My gracious!* I ought to have called there. Some years ago I spent part of a Summer with them. Let me see; it was the very Summer my daughter *Jem.* bettered her circumstances. I can tell your ladyship they are worthy sort of people, charitable, and *all that!* They have a mighty pretty young body with them they were bringing up very decently.”

“Suppose,” said Lady Elizabeth, “we call there this evening; and if we think they will amuse us, invite them for to-morrow?”

Edward, on the strength of this, went to the Glebe to give notice of the intended visit. It had not been in his power to call sooner, as the ladies could not dispense with his attendance on their water-parties until the arrival of Stockdale and Talbot, who came the preceding day with Mrs. Stockdale.

As the weather was hot, and it was uncertain when the party would return, Lady Elizabeth proposed their having an early dinner, taking a long drive, and calling at the Glebe on their return.

CHAPTER XI.

Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain
These simple blessings of the lowly train ;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway !

GOLDSMITH.

THE Kellys were led, by Louisa, to expect a visit from the ladies at Listowel Park, but as their coming was uncertain, no preparation was made.

The carriage drew up, and Mr. Kelly handed out Lady Elizabeth; Mrs. Belmont, Listowel, Edward, and Villars followed. They had taken a long drive, and arrived just as Louisa had despaired of their coming.

The worthy couple gave them a most

hospitable reception; and there was such an air of frankness and cordiality in their manner, without the least pretension, that Lady Elizabeth was irresistibly prepossessed in their favour, and accepted their invitation to tea. Mrs. Belmont was delighted to see Mrs. Kelly, with whom she immediately entered on, to them, a most interesting topic, and poured into her delighted ears a full account of the success with which she had tried the various receipts Mrs. Kelly had given her.

Both Edward and Mr. Villars were disappointed at Louisa's being so occupied as to preclude all possibility of conversation. She prepared the fruit, and presided at the tea table. The gentlemen were struck by the gracefulness and ease of her motions. Listowel gazed in silent wonder:—‘Where,’ thought he, ‘could she have acquired such dignity of manners! She has no model;—therefore it must be the éma-

nation of a well regulated mind!" He longed to fold her to his heart, and acknowledge her as his child; judging, no one who saw her could reproach him with the eccentricity of his conduct.— Even Lady Elizabeth would, in the happiness of calling her daughter, forgive him. He considered she was now only seventeen, and at that early period could not have attained sufficient firmness of character to steer her course through the stormy ocean of life. These reflections were interrupted by Mrs. Belmont's remarking—"What a *tidy young body* miss was!"

Lady Elizabeth, who was a great admirer of feminine beauty and elegance of manners, looked at Louisa now for the first time; and gratified Mrs. Kelly highly, by exclaiming, in an under voice—"She is very pretty!" and then added—"She is the very image of my daughter Mary! Mr. Listowel, do you not see the likeness?"

He replied in a hurried tone, that he could not see it, further than that they had both delicate features.

This was the first time since his entrance that Louisa had heard him speak.—She knew his voice.—A blush of surprise brightened her cheeks; and pleasure sparkled in her eyes as she looked towards him.

He bowed. “I presume, madam, you are the young lady who fled at my presence from Listowel Park?”

The circumstance was explained to Lady Elizabeth, who said, she was rejoiced to hear Miss Kelly was so fond of Listowel Park, and hoped she would indulge her with her company. “We shall want you very much this evening to make up our dance: will you allow me, Mrs. Kelly, to run away with her? And if you and Mr. Kelly will give us the pleasure of your company to-morrow at dinner, she can return with you at night.”

Louisa looked anxiously towards Mr. Kelly; but said nothing.

He promised to dine with them; but added, he did not think it possible the ladies could have the honour of waiting on her.

“It would be entirely out of my power,” said Mrs. Kelly; “but for the child, I do not see why she should not have the diversion. It is natural at her age to love it; and I warrant she would be as gay as a lark among them!”

Mr. Kelly looked grave:—“I do not doubt my Louisa’s enjoyment of the company she would meet there; but consider, my dear, how dull this place would afterwards appear; and you know,” added he in a low voice, “it was her father’s particular wish she should be trained in retirement: besides, could our child appear in those mean habiliments among such fine people?”

Listowel reminded Lady Elizabeth that it was late, and offered to order

the carriage. He added in a whisper, —“ You only distress these good people. Pray press them no further.”

His anxiety made him forget all caution, for he well knew opposition, more particularly his opposition, ever made her more determined.

As soon as he was gone, Lady Elizabeth took Louisa by the hand.—“ Your coming, my dear Miss Kelly, will confer a favour on me. As my company will for this week be mostly engaged on boating-parties, your society would much enliven us. I promise you,” said she, addressing Mrs. Kelly, “ to have her under my own eye—and as to her dress—I think, my dear, you look charmingly; but leave that to my care. I hope you wish to come?”

Of that her ladyship could have little doubt when she looked at the pleased and grateful expression of her countenance; she therefore renewed her entreaties to Mr. Kelly, readily obviating

every objection he could make, until, at length, he was obliged to yield. Louisa's beseeching looks, likewise, influenced him. She was sent to prepare her clothes: this was soon done; and she was in the parlour when Mr. Listowel returned to say the carriage was ready. Lady Elizabeth, with a triumphant glance, told him they were to bear off their prize, and reproached him for not having said one civil word to Miss Kelly yet.

"Oh! I leave such affairs to you; Miss Kelly must know I shall be very happy to have her for our guest!"

They found the drawing-room on their return, as usual, brilliantly lighted.

Mrs. Belmont went to her netting, and Lady Elizabeth walked up and down the room with Louisa, who never looked more lovely. The dark brown of her coarse stuff, set off the alabaster whiteness of her neck, her black glossy hair was combed up smooth behind, and

a profusion of natural ringlets graced her polished forehead; her complexion was heightened by blushes at being presented to so many strangers, Lady Wilmot, and some of the party having just returned.

They were all curious to know who Louisa was, and where she came from.

Mrs. Belmont asked her daughters if they did not remember the little girl they were so fond of when at the Glebe: they immediately recognised her in that lovely, interesting young woman, as likewise did their brothers: the latter she had not seen for two years, her dislike of them consequently was lessened, yet she instinctively drew nearer to Lady Elizabeth, vainly thinking her presence would awe them into silence.

At length their gallant speeches caught her ladyship's ear, and seeing her *protégé* very much annoyed by their nonsense, begged they would in mercy

desist; as this was Miss Kelly's first *débüt* in fashionable society.

“Do not suppose our acquaintance commences here. I assure your ladyship,” replied Mr. Robert Belmont, “she was very near accusing me of mal-practices. Had not Talbot sprung forward with the alertness of a Mercury, and transformed himself into a duck, and dived after her, I should at this moment have her ghost haunting me with reproaches for my ill-timed jokes!”

“You are quite a riddle; the comprehending you would take too much time. Tell me, my love, what does he mean?”

Louisa then related how Talbot had saved her from drowning: adding—“If he had failed, he must have shared my fate.”

“Where were you?” inquired Lady Elizabeth, turning to Robert Belmont, “all this time?”

“I was waiting the event on the

bank; and was so shocked that I had not even presence of mind to throw them a rope. Have you," said he, turning to Louisa, "seen Talbot since?—He is a fine dashing fellow now!—I am curious to see if he will remember you: he will be here presently."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Louisa, blushing deeply; "I thought he had been in England."

"Then you have seen him; and your heart has learned to flutter at the approach of its favourite beau. Poor little dear!—do not let it beat for Talbot! Lord Ellismore has selected a bride for him, who is as inferior to you in personal charms, as you are to her in riches. She is heiress to one hundred thousand pounds—the sum total of all her charms!"

Louisa sighed deeply: "Poor Mr. Talbot!—is this really possible? And can his father allow his eldest son to sacrifice himself to one so disagreeable?"

“ Every one has his price !” returned Belmont ; “ you must acknowledge he has sold himself nobly. But you look pale ! Where are the roses that bloomed so lately at my bidding ? The lilies, I think, have usurped their place !”

CHAPTER XII.

“ Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright ;
It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to Summer even,
And, from their tissue, fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.”

THERE was a bustle in the hall, occasioned by the arrival of Mary and her party. They had set out with Lady Wilmot, who was returned at least an hour. Lady Elizabeth had suffered much anxiety from their delay, and even Listowel would have been unhappy, were not Stockdale and Talbot in their escort. Her ladyship, with Louisa, hastened to meet them.

They were detained by the breaking of a spring, and obliged to stop whilst

it was tying up. Mary gave a ludicrous account of their adventures, of which they were all so full, that they did not, for some minutes, observe Louisa, who was rejoiced at remaining for a little time in the back ground: it gave her time to recover her self-possession, to conquer her *mauvaise-honte*, and receive even Talbot with composure. He was the first to perceive her.

“Good Heavens!” exclaimed he, “Is it possible! Do I see Miss Kelly?”

“You do indeed!” said she, holding out her hand to him. “I hope, after so long an absence, you do not forget me?”

“It however requires some memory, you are grown so much. I do not ask how you do; but I hope your excellent parents are in health?”

“They are! they will be delighted to see you!”

Lady Elizabeth now took her by the hand to present her to her daughter, who was astonished, and wondered

where her mother could have found such a lovely young person; and, as she had not a particle of envy in her composition, was happy at having such an acquisition to their party. After some conversation she led her to the dancing-room. Talbot engaged Louisa as his partner just as Edward came to claim her; he therefore engaged her for the next set.

Louisa looked very much distressed, and tried to draw back.

“You know,” at length she said, “I cannot dance, and never learned, excepting the lessons I received from you and the Miss Morneys.”

“Never fear! trust to me, I will bring you through the mazes of the figure.”

She stood up in the set, making but sad work of the first dance, not a little confused by every one setting her right. Mary considerably repeating the same figure in the next dance, she was soon

perfect. The music, the dancing, and the novelty of the scene raised her spirits. Talbot led her to a seat at the lower end of the room ; she entered into lively conversation : her innocent mind felt no care, no drawback ; but was given up to the pleasure of the moment.

Listowel watched her from a distance in speechless anxiety ; from her first entrance into the ball-room she engrossed his entire attention ; anxious to ascertain the bias of her mind, to discover if she too were tinctured with that fatal vanity, so destructive to his happiness, and enfeebling to the character of his wife.

He was therefore in despair when he saw that even Mary, with her wild spirits, could not be more caught with the gaiety of the moment : ‘ nature will break out,’ thought he, ‘ and surely this girl must have a double portion of folly, or else her excellent foster-parents’ pre-

cepts would have taught her more prudence than to be thus perfectly at her ease, and unreserved with a stranger. Alas! vanity is inherent in her nature; for what have I banished her from home, but to catch this confounded Kerry brogue!

Louisa, at length, observed his earnest, and almost angry gaze. It at once dispelled the charm, and broke the fairy spell of her happiness. Her smiles vanished, she was silent and growing pale. Talbot remarked her change of colour, and fearing she found the heat oppressive, urged her to come into the refreshment-room. She refused, as she thought Mr. Listowel looked as if he wished to speak to her.

Talbot went to bring her a glass of wine and water.

Listowel then approached.

“I perceive, madam,” said he, “you enjoy the pleasure of this evening vastly.”

“ I did so,” replied she, colouring and looking down, “ a few minutes ago.”

“ What!” returned he, looking very sternly; “ can you not be happy a moment without that gentleman at your elbow? But I give you credit for the honesty of the confession.”

She looked very much shocked.—“ You mistake me!” replied she, timidly, looking at him through her long eyelashes, humid with tears; “ you were the cause of my change of feeling; you looked displeased at me, and I feared I had unknowingly incurred your censure. I hope you will consider what a novice I am in society—that I know none of its rules.—Pray, dear sir! tell me what breach of good manners I have been guilty of, that I may in future be more careful.”

Listowel felt softened, and said, smiling—“ I find the little mountain-girl can teach the man of the world. I must

indeed beg your pardon for not disguising my feelings better."

"I do not like disguise, if it were necessary," returned she, smiling; "you were doubtless wrong: that is at least the criterion of conduct my father has set me."

"That rule may answer in solitude," returned her father; "but not in crowds:—for instance, my feelings were just, but good breeding sometimes renders disguise necessary."

"I think I know what my father would say on that subject. But I am so anxious to hear my offence, before Mr. Talbot returns, that I will not at present give you his most excellent precept."

"You do not choose then I should point out your faults before Mr. Talbot?" said Listowel.

"I fear," said she, smiling, "that proves my pride of heart. He is my best friend; and would, if he saw my error, be my monitor!"

“ You knew him then before this evening ?” inquired Listowel.

“ Oh, yes ! He is my earliest friend, and saved me from a dreadful death !” She then related, with great animation, the anecdote of the mill-stream.

He thanked her when she had done. — “ You make me ashamed of myself,” replied he ; “ I judged you too hastily.”

“ In what ?” asked she, eagerly. “ What did you suppose I had done ?”

“ I suppose you have heard that you are the very image of my daughter Mary ?”

“ I have been so flattered.”

“ Well, listen to my apology. I was comparing your manners and dispositions ;—her only fault is uncontrollable vivacity, a heedlessness in doing what she wishes ; too easy of access, which, with men, gives her the appearance of coquetting. These are all great faults ;—great defects in her nature ; which still her education has tended to in-

crease ; they have grown with her growth, and strengthened with her strength : but you, Miss Kelly, have been educated under happier auspices—listening to the voice of instruction from your first youth, divine precepts should be ingrafted in your heart, and show their results in all your actions : instead of which, I saw you unrestrained by the novelty of your situation, devoted as wholly as my poor Mary to the mirth of the moment ; and treating one I thought a stranger, with the familiarity of an old acquaintance. Will you forgive my harsh surmises ?”

“ I do indeed, and hope to profit by your sincerity. I am too volatile, too giddy ; every thing here charmed me, and appeared like a fairy scene :—the grandeur and beauty of the ladies and gentlemen reminded me of the Arabian tales ;—these brilliant lights and magnificent apartments of a fairy palace, belonging to a benevolent fairy, called by us mor-

tals, Lady Elizabeth !—You appeared like a severe genius, that was to banish me the haunts of pleasure.—Pray pardon me—is not your reproof,” said she, timidly, “ rigorous ?—and would you not doom me to a fate similar to that of poor Tantalus, to see all and enjoy nothing ?—Here is Mr. Talbot returning, he is, like you, versed in courts, and shall judge for me.”

“ Is this discretion to place your conduct in a young man’s keeping ?”

Louisa looked at him earnestly.—
“ You are not old !”

“ I see we men cannot argue with young girls !”

She laughed, and then said with a more serious air—“ Do not say so ; I will be on my guard not to transgress again.”

Talbot returned, making many apologies for his long absence. Edward now joined them, and claimed her hand for the next two dances ; he had been

standing aloof, watching the earnest conversation she held with his father, of which he did not overhear a word. His mind was tortured with doubt and anxiety, so that there was no danger, with such a partner, of Louisa's being too lively.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ E'en had you seen, bathed in the morning dew,
The budding rose its infant bloom display;
When first its verdant tints unfold to view,
It shrinks, and scarcely trusts the blaze of day.”

So soft, so delicate, so sweet, she came
Youth's damask glow just dawning on her cheek.

GOLDSMITH.

LOUISA did not awake the next morning, until Judy (Mrs. Kelly's maid), burst into the room, with a large bundle, which she flung down.—“ So, Miss *Lowsey*! a pretty time in the day for you to lie soaking! Get up! and see what your good mother has sent you:—as fine a suit of clothes as ever my two eyes did see! and indeed I never *seed* the like, except with the players last Spring-tide.—Oh, dear!” exclaimed she,

opening the parcel, and holding up the gown, “how it rustles and shines!”

“What am I to do, Judy, with such old-fashioned clothes?—Does my dear mother think I can wear them?”

“Here’s a bit of a note I put in my bosom; it will tell you all.”

It ran thus:—

“MY DEAR CHILD,

“I fear your brown stuff will look
“very shabby among all the fine people. I send you therefore the newest-
“fashioned finery I have; which was
“given me on my marriage by my good
“friend, Lady Evelina Murray, about
“thirty years ago. I am aware the
“fashions must have changed often since
“then; but they say, the old fashions
“come round again, and if so, the things
“I send you may be of service. Judy
“will assist you in shortening the
“waist of the flowered silk; there is
“not a *brack* in it, and although

“ so long in my possession, is *spic and*
“ *span* new ; for it has been, since I
“ was a bride, folded up in lavender.
“ However, you had better, my dear
“ child, consult Lady Elizabeth’s maid
“ before you appear at the breakfast-
“ table. My good man will meet you
“ at dinner. I almost envy him ; and
“ now that you are away from me,
“ wish, for your sake, to turn visitor.
“ God bless you, my child !

“ Your affectionate

“ F. KELLY.”

Louisa pressed the paper to her lips.
“ Good mother, I thank you ! Let me
see ; oh ! what a fine flowered silk ! it
will stand on end ; how should I look
in it ?”

“ For all the world, Miss, like the
queen in the play. Bless your heart !
look at the taper waist, and the nice
shaped elbows, and the long ruffles ; how
quare you will look !”

“It is impossible for me to wear them. Heigh ho!—my brown stuff is not so ridiculous, as it is more suitable: they have seen it already, and they know I am not entitled to any better.”

“I think you are entitled to the best in the world, for a charming, sweet young lady! as I tells Patrick you are.”

“Patrick Brian!” exclaimed Louisa; “is he come back? I thought he had listed as a soldier?”

“So he did, the *crature*! God help him!—he would have been beyond the seas now, but for poor Harry Talbot! I believe I never gave the history of my *venture*; as you were, on my return, at Parson Morney’s. Well; here is the short and the long of it. Poor Patrick, when I would not be *said* by him, went and listed, and sent me home all the bounty, with a bit of a note, saying, mayhap I would like the money without him; although I would not have him without the money. Well, sure enough,

I took on sadly, and would not *spake* to father or mother; but was nigh *kilt* with the impression on my heart. So, without saying a word to mortal, one morning I put on my best, and never rested until *I'se* came to Tralee, where Patrick was with the army.—I *axed* to see his captain:—his varlet of a *wallet-de-sham* said he was at breakfast, and that I might go tramp about my business! Says I, my business is of too much consequence; I see him there in the parlour; let me just say two words to him! ‘Upon my honour you shan’t!’ said he, spreading his arms, and holding them up as high as if he feared I would make a spring over. No? my gentleman, says I; and like an eel I twisted under them. We had a sort of *tussle*, and he was near proving a match for me; when out came the captain himself—who should after him, but our Harry Talbot! I screamed with joy! Ah, Judy! says I, you have found

a friend ; all will go well !—‘ Judy !’ says the *wallet-de-sham*—‘ learn your distance, and do not call our captain names !’ I laughed, and said, It’s myself I mean ; I hope no offence !—‘ None in life !’ says he ; ‘ and whatever your name be, you are as handsome a wench as ever I seed !’ ‘ Let her go, John,’ says the captain, ‘ until she tells me her business : you should never refuse such a handsome woman access to me !’ On which I walks up to him, and going on my two knees, I kissed the fringe of his sash, and puts the money Patrick sent me into his hand, with two golden guineas more.”

“ They must have thought you mad !”

“ You shall hear.—‘ What’s all this for ?’ asked he. God bless your honour ! it’s for Patrick’s liberty ; he is as likely a youth as ever you see ; but he went mad for the love of me ! and then, when his *sinses* were gone, he did the foolishhest thing in the *varsal* world—de-

served his old father and mother, and went forsooth a *sodgering*! But what call can your honour, or the king have to him now, when he has lost his *sinses*?"

"Did the poor man really go mad?" inquired Louisa.

"Mad, indeed! But to make my long story short," continued Judy, "they made great *divarsion* at my saying Pat was mad; and seemed to think me mighty *cute*; and they said I was a beautiful *crature*—that was their word; and that I might pass for a lady any day, with that proud toss of my head, which was mighty *quality-like*! That was when I hit the *wallet* a slap in the face for squeezing my hand."

"You tell me only of the compliments paid you.—What did Talbot say all this time?" inquired Louisa.

"Say!—every thing in life!—that I might set my heart at rest, and not be crying my apron full! for that he would, if not *unpossible*, procure him his liberty!"

And so he did ! God bless his honour ! and has taken him to be his own *wallet-de-sham*. Says I to him, last night—I will marry you, Patrick Brian, when your master gets a wife for me to wait upon.—‘Ah ! then,’ says he ; ‘but I never tell secrets, Mrs. Judy ;’ and he lets it all out ; and why should’nt he to his own sweet-heart ?”

“What did he tell you ?” inquired Louisa.

“Oh, Miss ! it would make your two eyes dance if you heard it ; but I knows how to hold my tongue ; and that is more than Pat does !”

“You are right, Judy ; it was wrong of me to ask.”

“Oh ! then, if you knew but all !” said Judith ; “its you that should be *axing* ; both out of pity and out of gratitude.”

“I am very grateful to Mr. Talbot, every one knows.”

“*Augh !* I do not mean the *oul dgratitude* of the swimming. Lord bless

your pretty face ! *I means* all he is now suffering for your sake."

"For me ? that is impossible !" exclaimed Louisa.

"*Unpossible* indeed, is it ! when he is after refusing the finest lady in the land for your sake ; and with a power of money ; and after putting the *ould* gentleman of a lord in a passion with him !"

Louisa coloured like scarlet ; but affecting to laugh ; after a moment's pause, said—"I will explain this secret to you, Judy : Pat says this to induce you to marry him."

"Is it the *likes* of him to think of imposing upon me, Judy Donohoe ? No, no—my nature is not so soft ! I'm a match for Pat any day ! But I'll hold my tongue since you cast up doubts at what I'm a-telling you," said she, with a scornful toss of her head, and stretching her very beautiful neck.

There was a rap at the door.

It was Mrs. Tippet, Lady Elizabeth's woman, who was desired to call very early on Miss Kelly with a suit of her lady's clothes, to allow of time to alter them if they did not fit. She was surprised to find the young lady already dressed.

Louisa thanked her for her attention, but refused wearing those fine cloaths: humbly reflecting that her attire was such as she was entitled to wear; that a curate's daughter could not be expected to dress better; and that in those fine clothes she would resemble the jay dressed in borrowed plumes.

Judy took up the clothes; the sight of them dispelled the gloom on her countenance. "They are really beautiful, Miss! I long to see you dressed in them—you will be the flower of the flock, and will look somewhat better than in this old-fashioned trumpery!" giving them a kick.

Mrs. Tippet expressed her surprise at

the old-fashioned finery, and could with difficulty keep her countenance, when she understood they were sent for Miss Kelly to wear; who was mortified and out of patience with Judy for so officiously displaying them.

Mrs. Tippet again urged Louisa to allow her the honour of assisting her to dress.

Louisa politely refused.

Judy grew angry; and said, she was sent by her mother to see her dressed. She entreated and threatened by turns.

At length Mrs. Tippet observed, they were the very plainest suit her lady had; and that she knew her ladyship would expect so very young a lady would be guided by her wishes.

Louisa made no further objection. Mrs. Tippet dressed her. Judy was in admiration of how well she became those delicate muslins and rich laces. “Ah, Miss! you look a thousand *pound* better than in your brown stuff!” Then addressing Mrs. Tippet—“The child

keeps all her frocks at Parson Morney's," said she, casting a sly glance at Louisa : " she sees more company there than in this part of the kingdom."

Louisa was delighted to break away from them ; and meeting one of the servants in the hall, asked to be shown to the room where the family breakfasted. He showed her into a large old-fashioned parlour, hung with very fine tapestry, which she had often contemplated.

Listowel came in immediately after, and was surprised at Louisa's making her appearance so early.—" I suppose," said he, smiling, " this is one of the good customs you have learned at the Glebe. I recommend you to retain it for ever."

She promised compliance ; and added, in a timid manner, that she was happy at length to gain his approbation ; and felt much indebted to him for the kind interest he took in her conduct.

Listowel coloured, and was very much

agitated. “ I fear, madam,” he said, looking very grave, “ you will think I have presumed too far; but you are to consider, I have a daughter just your age—and there are other circumstances that make me feel the anxiety for you that I should for her, if launched for the first time into life without a friend.”

Louisa smiled.—“ I should be sorry to lessen the interest you feel for me; yet, I must acknowledge my case is not quite so deplorable. I have, besides my parents, one steady, long tried friend, who would be as far as yourself from flattering me.” She was obliged to look down, and play with a spaniel that most conveniently fawned on her; as, for the first time in her life, she felt a consciousness when speaking of Talbot. “ Every one, my dear sir! is kind to me; even the Mr. Belmonts tolerate me, and have not tormented me much since I was a baby.”

“ Do not trust to the world. Its

friendship is a mere vapour; although I acknowledge your advantages are great, yet your situation is exposed," said Listowel.

"Dear sir! have I not a father and a mother?—their poverty is no disgrace. I should think the world looks more to actions, and that by our conduct we are respectable or otherwise. I see this exemplified in my dear father. You, sir, that are so rich and powerful" (Listowel coloured and almost started), "cannot be more revered and loved!"

"At present, my dear young friend! the world appears too gay and smiling for you to understand my caution: but when it is otherwise, remember, I am your friend! and that in all matters of doubt or difficulty, you may apply to me as you would to a father!" He took her hand, and pressing it to his lips, he said tenderly—"God bless you, my child!" His eyes were filled with tears.

She was surprised and agitated:—

they heard voices in the hall. “Here comes Mary,” said Listowel, quickly recovering his composure. “For heaven’s sake, try and soften her character!—oh! that she had your steadiness, your gentleness!”

Louisa smiled with ineffable pleasure : —“So, my censor can flatter; and your praise comes to my heart, as it seems to proceed from the kindness you feel towards me, which, believe me, I will endeavour to deserve!”

CHAPTER XIV.

For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crown'd,
The berries crackle, and the mill turns round;
On shining altars of Japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide..
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast. }

POPE.

THE company had now all assembled in the breakfast parlour.

“ I am very happy to see you!” said Mary, holding out her hand to Louisa. “ I heard you had run off this morning to the Glebe; my maid told me she saw a beautiful young woman in such a dress as you wore last night, cross the lawn!”

Louisa felt a momentary shame, and

replied, she supposed it was a young woman from the village, who was about her size, and had been with her.

Talbot did not know Louisa, who felt hurt at his passing her over, until she ascribed this oversight to her change of dress. Sitting down to breakfast without family prayer, appeared very strange to her, as it was the first time in her life she had done so.—“ Ah!” said she, “ Mr. Listowel is right! The world, by its very pleasures is dangerous, for there was the same omission last night: no family prayer, and yet, until this moment, the neglect did not even occur to me!” She was entering into a train of serious reflections—but the breakfast-table is no place for reflection: on the contrary, some say it is a scene of trouble, and so Louisa might have said, for she was called to from all sides—‘ pray hand down this tea’—‘ the hot cakes are next you.’—It has been observed, likewise, that the

breakfast-table is not a place for lovers. Talbot found it so; as he did not for some time even discover Louisa was in the room, but was eagerly watching the door, expecting she would appear: he had never seen her but in a russet gown, and, as if it were a habit of some particular order, it did not occur to him that she could change it; or that it was too coarse and plain for the present brilliant assemblage. ‘True nobility of soul needs no foreign ornament.’ But at length he heard her addressed, her name pronounced. He looked towards her, and thought he had never beheld so lovely an object. Her graceful movements—the sense—the intelligence that lighted her countenance—and then the simplicity of her plain white dress, suiting the modest dignity of her figure;—the pain he felt was equal to his admiration.—‘Must I,’ said he, mentally, ‘give up all hopes of impressing that innocent being in my

favour—for riches, and a female perfectly indifferent to me?—Oh, my father! you demand too great a sacrifice!

“A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Talbot!” exclaimed Mrs. Belmont. “I believe you are a philosopher, and live on hydrogen and oxygen! For your roll, which you buttered so invitingly, seems forgotten; but perhaps you are in love?”

Talbot, in order to turn the conversation, asked her if she had seen the newspapers that morning.

“I did: I am glad you mentioned them. Upon my credit I had near forgotten a most extraordinary thing I read—of another world being found in this! Anne, dear! I left my eyes above stairs. Pray, child, read this account for Talbot.”

Anne read as follows:—

“Mr. Steinhanser, in Halle, has informed the world, through the medium of the Literary Gazette (of Halle), that

our globe is a hollow ball, the interior of which, perhaps, contains a little solar system. From a long series of observations of the magnetic needle, it seems to follow incontrovertibly, that at the depth of one hundred and seventy German (about seven hundred and sixty-five English) miles, a body revolves round the centre of the earth from west to east, but very slowly, as it takes four hundred and forty years to accomplish one revolution. This body is endued with a very strong magnetic power—”

“Perhaps,” interrupted Mrs. Belmont, “this body will have sufficient attraction to draw us through the earth when we are buried. Belmont, my dear! can it be hell, or purgatory?”

“I can give you no answer, my dear!” replied Mr. Belmont, laughing. “This is a phenomena in the natural world I never before heard of.”

Anne continued.

“This body is endued with a very

strong magnetic power, and is the cause of the variations of the magnetic needle. The calculations of Mr. Steinhanser are stated to be perfectly consonant to experience; and he foretold, in 1805, that the needle would first become stationary, and then, about the present time, return toward the east, which has, in fact, happened."

"Well! I declare I should not have understood a bit of all this, if my son *Off.* did not take so much trouble to explain it to me. But I protest, from the *magical* needle so suddenly stopping, and from our having such cold wet Winters, I fear some misfortune will come upon us:—and then, I had such a dream last night!"

Talbot laughed. "Do not make yourself unhappy, my dear madam!—the very chilly Winter we have had could only be owing to the accumulation, or rather approximation, of the polar ice to the Southward."

“Tush! what very big words you use! My son *Off.* is much clearer. Can you not tell me all about the ice, without *bothering* me with hard words? Where does it lie;—answer me that?”

“In plain English, it occupies the mid-channel between Greenland and Spitzbergen.”

“Oh, dear! what a cold place that Greenland must be!—Their cattle perish,” said Mrs. Belmont; “and I was told they could only breed pigs there; and that their cabbages are not bigger than a *two-and-six-penny bit!*”

“I suppose,” said Anne, “their Summers are milder, now that the ice is detached from the land, and is floating off in islands?”

“Some of these ice-bergs,” observed Talbot, “are of unusual magnitude, from an hundred to an hundred and thirty feet above the surface of the water, and several miles in circumference.”

Mary grew impatient at this conver-

sation, and rising from the breakfast-table, invited Louisa to the library, to show her some views she was taking of Killarney.

They withdrew arm in arm; Mary turned her head as she was leaving the room, and looking most beseechingly at Villars, requested, when he had finished his breakfast, that he would follow them, as she wanted his assistance in finishing a drawing.

Talbot and Stockdale both offered their services; Mr. Villars, however, would only be accepted.

Listowel smiled.—“I should have thought either of you gentlemen would have been preferred to Villars: but I see when Mary’s heart is in her business, she can show discernment in choosing an assistant.”

Mr. Villars almost started: plainly, however, perceiving that Listowel did not think it possible his daughter could look on him as a lover; although her

partiality was so very evident, that he could no longer doubt he was the object of her childish fancy : but feeling in no danger of betraying the trust reposed in him, he exerted all his influence in endeavouring to steady her character.

Mr. Stockdale viewed their intimacy with a jealous eye : he had long been prepossessed in Mary's favour ; her beauty and innocence charmed him. Every day her influence was increasing ; partly owing to the representations of Mrs. Stockdale, who earnestly wished her son to marry, and thought Mary Listowel in every respect would be a most desirable match for him. He was her only child, and since the death of her husband, Mr. Stockdale, he entirely engrossed her affections. She now saw with pleasure, ' Love for the first time shed his soft influence o'er his soul ; ' and hoped ere long to call Mary daughter. To bring this about was the

sole object of her visit to Listowel Park, and far from being deterred by the giddy gaiety of her manner, she did not even perceive it; considering her just what a young person ought to be, and that her lively disposition might have the happiest effect in dispelling the gloom that sometimes took possession of her son. She was equally blind in not perceiving Mary's partiality to Villars, deeming it impossible, that in a fair lady's estimation, any man could stand in competition with her son. His hopes were not raised so high, and yet at times he flattered himself Mary's attention to Villars proceeded merely from the respect she bore him as her brother's tutor, and from her affectionate and artless character, of which he suspected Villars willing to take advantage, and that, if not checked in time, he would irrecoverably engage her affections. This idea was passing in his mind when Villars rose to follow the

ladies, and irritated beyond endurance, he said, in reply to Listowel's remark, —“We can perceive Mr. Villars' *colouring* is exquisite! particularly when animated by such an approving eye!”

Stockdale's pointed sarcastic manner escaped notice, from the bustle occasioned by the arrival of morning visitors from Killarney.

Lady Rumbold first appeared; she was a fine woman, with rather proud, haughty, and masculine manners; which last peculiarity probably proceeded from her being a most excellent horsewoman, and priding herself on the knowledge of horses. She had a fine place near Killarney, where she resided since her husband's death. She was now attended by Colonel Smatter, his pretty daughter, and still prettier son.

Her ladyship dashed into the room. —“Halloo! so you are still at breakfast. Here are the Smatters! arrived only last night at Killarney, and left its

enchancing scenery to have the pleasure of surprising you, and seeing your very beautiful place. We intend, if you are not otherwise engaged, to spend the morning with you—unless you turn us out,” said she, gaily tapping Listowel on the shoulder with her whip, who was in conversation with Colonel Smatter. “I appoint you my beau, and resign young Smatter to some gentle fair one.” She continued, with a sly glance, and in an under voice—“Would you suppose him to be in my train?—that I should be attended by such a *minikin finikin* French powder-puff?”

The company formed into groups; the ladies giving each other an account of their morning excursions, excepting Lady Rumbold, who, surrounded by gentlemen, talked of horses. Mrs. Belmont, encouraged by the noisy familiarity of her manner, sidled over towards her, in order to take advantage of the first pause in the conversation.

“ My daughter *Off.* will be very sorry not to have the pleasure of seeing your ladyship this morning: she is confined by a bad cold, but will be happy to hear that I have had the honour of conversing with you.”

Lady Rumbold drew herself up with an air of haughty contempt, replying—
“ I think, madam, you must make some mistake; I have not the honour of knowing you or your daughter.”

Mrs. Belmont laughed heartily. “ That is excellent!” exclaimed she. “ No wonder your ladyship should stare at me as if I had seven heads! I did not tell you who we were—ha! ha! ha!—I will relieve your ladyship’s curiosity.—My daughter is married to your dead husband’s near relation Sir Offingdon Wilmot, *Baronight*, of Sea View, in the county of Clare. Poor things! they have been married about twelve years, and have no children. They would be mighty happy if you would pay them

a visit—indeed, my daughter and Sir *Off.* quite look upon you as their own, as you were married to his nearest blood relation. They have every thing decent and comfortable about them, and a fine large house ; so you may bring all your children ! Pray, my lady, how many have you ?”

Lady Rumbold was in amazement at this long harangue, and hesitated whether she should answer her, or stare her into silence.

“ Ah, my Lady ! I see you are like myself !” returned Mrs. Belmont ; “ I never could count my children until I learn’t them on my fingers—here they are : first, *Jem. Wat. Ma.*—I should not count her, as she died.—*Anne, Ca. Bob.* that’s all ! I wont mind the other poor things that died.”

Lady Rumbold could contain her risibility no longer, but burst into a most immoderate hearty laugh. Mrs. Belmont looked grave. “ Perhaps I

make too free, my lady, in troubling you with my affairs ; but as my daughter's mother, I think I may consider myself a-kin to you. Pray how old is your eldest son, the little lord ?”

Her ladyship had now recovered her composure ; and again looked cold and stiff ; but could not, without absolute rudeness, longer avoid replying to her questions ; and with as much haughtiness of manner as she could assume, told her Robert was ten years old.

“ That's a mighty pretty name !” returned Mrs. Belmont. “ I have a son Robert too ; there he is, talking to Lady Elizabeth : he is a great swain among the ladies !—How old is your youngest child ?”

“ Jane is two years old,” replied Lady Rumbold.

“ What an entertaining age ! how delightful if they would never grow bigger !” said the indefatigable Mrs. Belmont ; “ but they slip up into men and

women before one can look about!—That is one reason why Ireland is overstocked and not able to support her sons, but ships them off to that wild place, America!—at home there is no provision for them equal to the wealth they expect to make there. Poor fellows! how sadly they are disappointed!—how happy they would be to have the refuse of our table! I make great argument of that to my servants to prevent waste. They are shockingly extravagant; and, generally speaking, great rogues! Does not your ladyship find them so?”

“No; I am tolerably satisfied with my establishment,” returned her ladyship haughtily.

“Well, I did not think,” replied Mrs. Belmont, “your gardener clever; I thought your green-house plants looked *mighty rummish*, when I was at Rumbold-Hall the other morning; and nothing in the garden is in the clever, handsome

order they have them at my daughter's, Lady Wilmot."

Listowel, who continued at a little distance during this conversation, was highly amused :—he now came forward, fearing Lady Rumbold would be too much oppressed, and requested she would come with him to the stable, as he wanted her opinion of a beautiful horse he had purchased.

Lady Elizabeth had sent to the library for her daughter and Miss Kelly. They were there with Villars, who was finishing some sketches Mary had begun, whilst they amused each other by conversation. Mary had judgment sufficient to appreciate Louisa's talents, and felt no envy at her more solid acquirements; but, with Villars, wondered how in so retired a place she could obtain such an education.

Louisa was not sensible of their having any reason to wonder; she had learned without parade; and supposed

what instruction she had received was a matter of course, belonging to her situation in life ; imagining herself miserably deficient in not having received those showy accomplishments she heard were commonly attained by females in the higher ranks. The idea that she might belong to that rank always stimulated her endeavours to perfect herself in every thing she learned. She would have thought Mrs. Kelly, from her love of children, had adopted her from the lowest order, were it not for the old servant's information, and from her having a faint recollection of once living in a fine house, and having had servants to wait upon her : and she could not help entertaining a secret hope that her family might yet claim her, if deserving. She was passionately fond of music ; and with Mrs. Jackson's assistance had made great proficiency. She was enchanted with Mary's playing, whilst Mary was equally pleased with Louisa's.

They were thus occupied, when a

servant came from Lady Elizabeth, to request their company in the drawing-room.

Mary, at once, desired Thomas to say they were out; and looked surprised at seeing Louisa preparing to go.

“ Did you not hear?” said Mary, “ I sent word we were out; therefore we may stay and finish this duet; it is so easy, I think you would learn to play it at once.”

“ Oh! that is a temptation certainly: but, my dear friend!” said Louisa, “ I must go to your mother; she has sent for us. Surely you cannot be serious in saying we are out. You would not teach your servant to tell lies?”

“ Lies, my dear? what a harsh word! you are as bad as Villars!—say stories. If you lived more in the world you would find such stories cannot be lies; as they are supposed to be a polite manner of giving your friends to understand you do not choose to see company.”

“ It may be so,” replied Louisa, “ and

then it is not so blameable; but if you tell a lie—a story I am to say—are you not answerable for all its bearings?—And if you teach your servants to fib for your politeness, will they understand the nice distinction?—Or will their consciences be more tender when their own self-interest is at stake?”

“Oh, do pray stay!” entreated Mary.

“I cannot, unless you allow me to tell the truth,” said Louisa.

“No, no; that would never do—mamma would be angry!”

“So your polite apology is not, in this instance, to be understood?” demanded Louisa, smiling archly at Mary.

Mary laughed, and coloured; saying,—“Leave it to me; I have no scruple, and why should I act on yours?”

“Oh, my dear friend! if my father heard us, he would say—‘keep your hearts pure, and do not confound right with wrong;’ but you may say, that my father and pastor lives so secluded from the world, that he must remain unac-

quainted with its forms. What does Mr. Villars say on the subject? Perhaps he may influence you to think my father right."

Mr. Villars smiled; he had been an attentive auditor; but would not interfere, curious to see how their argument would terminate. When called upon, he could no longer remain silent; and telling Louisa she was perfectly right, requested they would immediately repair to the drawing-room, lest Lady Elizabeth should be displeased;—"as most likely," he added, "they await your presence to arrange plans for the morning's amusement."

"Why did you not say this sooner?" said Mary, pettishly; "you know I am always guided by you."

"Your argument amused me; I wished to hear how you would carry it on."

"You condemned me," said Mary.

"No, I did not! that would be too severe; you spoke and acted as you were taught; and were yourself an in-

stance of how far this fashionable license is dangerous; for under the plea of being polite, you reconciled your mind to the wish of deceiving," said her tutor gravely.

She looked hurt—her eyes filled with tears.

Villars took her hand. "Do not be angry if I have followed Miss Kelly's example in giving faults their proper names. I see she has been brought up in christian principles; her mind is pure and unsophisticated. She would be a charming companion for you; as, my dear little friend, your French governess has rather puzzled your notions of right and wrong."

"Perhaps you are right. There was one verse of the Bible my governess was very careful to impress on my mind:—
'Not to strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.'"

They now quitted the room, leaving Mr. Villars to finish the drawing. He

had been much charmed with Louisa, and thought he had never seen a more noble minded young creature. A little after he saw the whole party crossing the lawn towards the lake. Lady Rumbold escorted by Edward; Mary by Stockdale; Louisa by Talbot; while the remainder of the family followed in groupes.

Mary suddenly turned about, and looking towards the window where Villars was, beckoned to him. A moment after, a servant came to the library, with Miss Listowel's compliments, to request he would accompany the ladies to the lake.

Villars could not refuse, and snatching up his hat, was by her side in a moment.

CHAPTER XV.

“ My being

Owens in its deep recess the consciousness
That it is all his own—Nay, think my lord,
Can I behold his face, and not exclaim,
‘ This is the man who saved me ? ’ Can I feel
The pleasures of existence ?—can I breathe
The morning air ; or see the dying day
Sink in the western sky ?—Can I inhale
The rose’s perfume, or behold the lights
That shine for ever in yon infinite heaven ?—
Or can I taste one joy that nature gives
To this, our earthly tarrying place,—nor think
That ’tis to him I owe each little flower
I tread on in life’s bleakness ?
E’en now I place my hand upon my heart ;
And as it throbs, there is a voice within
That tells this throbbing heart it would lie still
Were not Hemeya brave ! ”

MARY looked highly gratified at Villars’
so readily obeying her summons. “ I
forgive you now,” said she, smiling,
“ your odious lecture of this morning,

and have been repeating to Mr. Stockdale my argument with Miss Kelly. He says she is a methodist, and that I shall turn one if I am much in her company. What do you say?"

"That I think Miss Kelly a most charming young person, highly to be admired for the strictness of her principles. As to her religious —— here she is, to answer Mr. Stockdale's charge."

Louisa now approached, her countenance glowing with health and beauty.

"What have I done," said she, timidly, "to offend him?"

Mr. Stockdale looked confused, and begging no more might be said on the subject, requested she would be of their boating party. Edward now came up, and joining in the request, added, in an under voice—"I bought the boat on purpose for your amusement, as you thought the lake worthy of one."

She replied, it would give her great pleasure to make one of their party;

but that she was engaged to spend the morning with Lady Elizabeth, who perhaps would now excuse her, as she had so many visitors. She looked at Mr. Villars as she said this, and added softly — “May I ask your opinion?”

“Since you apply to me,” replied he, “I think I had better speak to Lady Elizabeth, and ask her pleasure.”

“How very good you are! that is precisely what I wished you to do.”

Louisa looked at Talbot, to read in his expressive countenance whether she had acted right; to her amazement he appeared displeased and grave; and on her speaking to him gave no answer; the little dog he was playing with apparently engrossing his attention.

Edward begged Louisa would hasten forward, that she might, at least, look at the boat.

She did so, and soon was seated by him in it. “How delightful!” exclaimed she, “so calm, so retired; and the blue

sky so beautifully reflected in the water ! Here comes Mr. Villars ; what does he say ? ”

“ You may , ” said Villars , “ dispose of yourself as you please this morning . Tomorrow , Lady Elizabeth will take you the promised drive . ”

The remainder of the party now joined them , excepting Talbot and Lady Rumbold ; they gaily put from shore ; the gentlemen undertaking to row ; they went round and round the lake . Mary sung , and Edward accompanied her on the clarionet . Louisa was enchanted , she thought she had never been so happy , and only regretted Talbot was not present to partake of her pleasure .

Mary begged of her to sing the duet they had been practising together ; she consented , although very much frightened ; as she proceeded she gained more courage , flattering herself , that , in the loudness of the clarionet , her voice could not be heard . - But Edward , when

when he saw her composed, played lower and lower, deriving infinite pleasure from the soft, rich tones of her mellow voice.

Still, the absence of Talbot disturbed Louisa; it was so unusual with him to leave her, looking displeased, and that in sudden manner. Edward's attentions, however, which were divided with Miss Smatter, gave her little time for reflection.

Miss Smatter was a very pretty girl, just returned from a boarding school: she had been occasionally with the regiment, and much in military society, which had entirely worn off that shyness and timidity natural to her age, rendering her as assured and easy in her manners as a woman of thirty; she did not choose Edward should be engrossed by Louisa; and therefore, whenever they were engaged in conversation, she was sure to interrupt, and endeavour to attract his attention to herself.

Stockdale and Villars were rowing all

this time, and now resigned their oars to Edward and Mr. Smatter, who was shocked at taking the dirty oar in his delicate hands; and very soon complaining of fatigue, requested Clara, his sister, would assist him: she did so, and performed much better than her brother.

Mary now could not be prevailed on to remain quiet, and insisted on Edward's resigning to her his oar. He consented; and the consequence was, that, by her giddy manner, the boat was nearly upset: when, distracted at the threatened danger, she stood up, and losing her balance, must have fallen into the water, if Villars had not caught her in his arms, where she lay near fainting. He tried to re-assure her, requesting Edward and Stockdale would take the oars, and make for the shore.

Arrived there, Villars carried his fair charge to a grassy bank. They tried to recover her; she quickly revived, and fixing her soft blue eyes on Villars, with

the tenderest expression breathed forth her gratitude.—“You have saved my life! I cannot be too grateful! My dear Edward, thank him!”

“You are unlike the generality of people,” observed Mr. Villars, “saved from drowning: I have heard it remarked it never occurs to them to thank their deliverer.”

“I have not been in the water—but, I do not think to me it would have been the water of oblivion:—no, Mr. Villars,” continued she, in an under soft tone, “I will ever consider my life as yours!”

They now returned slowly to the house.

Stockdale was offended at Mary's evident blindness to his merits. Yet, he could not suppose she thought seriously of Villars: on the contrary, he sometimes flattered himself her conduct proceeded from mere coquetry, to try his patience: hoping, therefore, to pay her

off in her own coin, he left her, to flirt with Miss Smatter, who walked on before, leaning on her brother's arm.

Edward now entered into unrestrained conversation with Louisa: he requested she would not consider him as an acquaintance of yesterday, but as a friend: that he could look on her in no other light; which, perhaps, proceeded from her strong resemblance to his sister.

Louisa expressed herself very grateful for his kindness, and for the attention she experienced from all his family.

He then led her to talk of the Kellys; inquired how long she had resided with them; and when she intended returning to her parents.

“I have been here,” she replied, “since I was a very little girl. But, alas! I fear my parents have greatly offended my more than father, Mr. Kelly; for he never allows me to mention them. Kind as he is to me in every

other respect—on this subject he is surely cruel, and forbids me even to think of them.”

“Where do they live?” demanded Edward.

“Alas! I know not! My father left me here when very young; which circumstance, even, I should not remember, but for the loquacity of Mrs. Kelly’s old female servant; who, contrary to Mr. Kelly’s strict prohibition, has kept it fresh in my memory, and likewise every little information I could give of myself on my first arrival.”

“Did you mention then,” inquired Edward, “no names of places, or family names, by which I could assist you in tracing them?”

“I did, but so unintelligibly, that no one could understand me,” replied Louisa.

“How very extraordinary! Do you even know how nearly you are related to Mr. Kelly?”

“No; nor have I ever been claimed as a relation by him. When I have told him (from curiosity to find out the truth) what others have said on the subject, he has always silenced me, without my gaining the least information.”

“What can be his motive?” said Edward thoughtfully.

“I fear my parents have in some manner offended him seriously,” replied his sister; “or he would not, surely, have the cruelty to leave me in such ignorance concerning them. My conjectures often make me miserable: you are the first person I have ever spoken to on the subject; and before I drop it for ever, I must—”

She was proceeding, her eyes filled with tears, and the agitation of her manner betraying great emotion; when, on looking up, she saw Mr. Kelly, Listowel, and Talbot approaching, and so

near, that feeling terrified lest they should have overheard her conversation, she turned of an ashy paleness.

Edward too looked painfully confused; his father darted a furious look at him, and he coloured like scarlet. Listowel then taking hold of Louisa's arm, before she could remonstrate, hurried her down the shrubbery walk leading to the lake. She trembled violently: Listowel was no less agitated: he still grasped her arm, which she now attempted to withdraw; and was dreadfully shocked on beholding the rage and agony of his countenance. Not knowing what to attribute it to, she almost dreaded that he was actuated by a temporary insanity.

At length he found utterance, and said—"Good heavens!—speak to me! Was my son declaring a passion for you?—Alas! your guilty looks declare it!" Then, striking his hand against his forehead, he exclaimed—"I am the most

miserable of men ! Robert Belmont's observation is but too true !”

Louisa remained silent ; at first from indignation, and from feeling too proud to answer such a rough and unauthorised questioner. But the idea again recurring of his insanity, terrified her, and she could not behold his agony without pity.

“ Ah ! your silence declares my surmises just !—My son loves you !—Oh, heaven !” groaned Listowel.

“ You deceive yourself—he has declared no passion for me !” said Louisa.

“ Is it possible ?—Then I can breathe again, and look in the face of heaven without feeling myself the guiltiest of beings !”

“ You astonish me !” exclaimed Louisa. “ Who am I, that there can be such crime, such odium attached to an union with me ?—For heaven's sake explain yourself !—What disgrace do I labour under ? Oh ! answer me ! I took pity on

you, and would not leave you torn with doubt:—now will you not behave to me with equal generosity?”

He sighed heavily:—“I have indeed,” replied he, “behaved very ill, and terrified you, my poor child! Will you forgive me?—When you have entirely satisfied my mind, depend on my making you what amends I can. Tell me what was the subject of your conversation?—why were your eyes red with weeping?—and why did you look so confused? Answer me truly!”

“Alas! he asked me questions that led me to speak of early days!”

Listowel started.—“Indeed! What did you say?”

“I could only speak of my not knowing who my parents were—that subject always makes me weep. I was, when you met us, confessing that my father’s injunctions were that I should be silent on the subject—therefore when he came in view I felt confusion at having disobeyed.”

“Heaven bless you!” uttered Listowel, taking her hand and pressing it tenderly to his lips; “you have now restored me to peace. I must try and relieve your anxiety.—What shall I say? Your parents are respectable; I know, and value them:—but, for family reasons, silence respecting them is to be recommended. Indeed, it is absolutely necessary; and you would be very wrong to disobey Mr. Kelly’s injunctions. I see by your speaking countenance you are ready to ask an hundred questions:—but, say no more, my dear child!—I am not at liberty to answer you. Yet I entreat you will ever consider me as your true friend; and promise never to engage your heart and hand without my approbation!”

“My heart or hand?” replied his daughter. “Alas! who would seek an alliance with me—abandoned as I am by my own family? You tell me not who they are; and how am I to judge of them—but by the horror you testi-

fied at the bare idea of being connected with me? Oh, no! never will I enter any family under such circumstances!" She paused; a gleam of hope animating her countenance.—"Will you even tell me, are my parents in this kingdom? Do they ever intend to claim me?"

"Do not ask me: satisfy your mind by reflecting that you have been for many years your father's fond hope; and that he is alive to every thing that concerns you. He, even from what he hears, suspects that Talbot is your admirer, and declares, if that match takes place his most ardent wish will be gratified."

Louisa blushed deeply; was silent a moment, and still looking down, gained courage to ask—"Do you not know his father has a match in view for him, and have you no compassion on his father? Judge by your own feelings what his would be if such a person as I am were

introduced into his noble family ! But he will have no such trial."

They heard company approaching. Listowel took her hand hastily, and kissing it, prayed God to bless her; then darting into a walk at the opposite side, instantly disappeared.

Louisa, on hearing the dinner-bell, hastened in to dress, glad to make her escape, and reach her own room without meeting any of the family. She required time to recover her composure, lest she should excite the curiosity of Lady Elizabeth's maid, who, she expected, would insist on attending her toilette.

CHAPTER XVI.

“Fortitude is a very desirable part of philosophy. We may scorn and laugh at trifles in general, but they become serious when attended with certain consequences ; and mortifying where shielded villainy can take advantage.”

EVERY one was assembled in the draw-room when Louisa entered. To her great relief, Mr. Kelly met her at the door. He had been anxiously watching for her ; and now did not (as he said) instantly recognise his old friend in her new garment. He, however, quickly reassured her with a smile of approbation, and whispered—“Come, this is better than my good woman’s wedding finery, which I hear she sent you this morning:—I expected to see you in silks and satins ! And let me tell you, my fair one, she looked as lovely in

them forty years ago as you would at this day! But, my dear child! what has been the matter?—you do not look well! Ah! these late hours do not agree with you!”

Lady Elizabeth asked Louisa if she had seen Mary since her return.

Louisa looked round the room for her.

“You will not find her here,” said Lady Elizabeth. “My sweet girl has been most unreasonably terrified at the danger she has escaped; suffering almost as much as if she had been immersed in the water, and does not come down to dinner.”

“May I go to her room,” demanded Louisa, “and see how she is?”

“Do, my dear! If possible,” said the anxious mother, “prevail on her to return with you; we shall excuse her not being dressed.”

Louisa went to her room, and knocking softly at the door, it was opened by Mary, who started on seeing her.

“ I took you for the maid, with the dinner-tray. If you come from mamma to bring me down stairs, your errand is vain ; for I will not go down until I choose it myself.”

Louisa felt shocked at the undutifulness of this speech, yet could not withhold her admiration of the lovely object before her, attired in a beautiful undress ; her fair ringlets parted on her polished forehead, and a profusion of long shining hair plaited round her head. Her face was pale, until her colour rose at the idea of her mother's supposed interference.

Louisa took her hand affectionately. —“ You have certainly,” said she, “ guessed a part of my mission : but what has principally brought me, is to see how you do. I am very sorry you have suffered so much from your fright !”

“ You are very good !” said Mary ; “ and look so kind-hearted that I will ask you to come in and sit down,

which is a favour I have granted no one yet."

Louisa was grateful, and seating herself on the proffered chair, made tender inquiries; asked her if she had taken any thing, and if she thought the walk home too much for her.

"Oh, spare me, Miss Kelly! I think I shall never recover that walk home!"

"For heaven's sake what happened?" inquired Louisa.

"Oh, do not mention it, lest I should relapse again! I have been barbarously treated, and by the last person in the world that you would suspect!" said Mary, her anger rising.

"I am all anxiety; and am even surprised, that any person in this polished society could be uncivil to you!" said Louisa.

"I suppose your astonishment will be complete, when you hear the offender's name is *Villars*!"

"Mr. Villars!—Is it possible?" exclaimed Louisa.

“ Yes,” replied Mary, fixing her intelligent blue eyes on Louisa, with a most penetrating glance;—“ but pray do not look so amazed—you are the cause !”

“ I the cause ! Impossible ! Stranger as I am, and wishing to please every one,—you above all others !—how can this happen ?” inquired Louisa.

“ You do look innocent !” said Mary, regarding her earnestly. Has Mr. Villars never given you any reason to suppose he thought of you more than as a friend ?”

“ Not even as a friend,” said Louisa, with a candour of manner peculiar to her ; “ we are but acquaintances of yesterday : I saw him once before, and then he scarcely spoke to me.”

“ This is a relief to my mind, and gives me hopes ! But you see,” continued she, smiling, “ I could not hate you, even when I thought it otherwise.”

“ All this is a riddle to me ! when will you solve it ? ” demanded Louisa.

Tippet now entered with the dinner-tray, and a summons for dinner to Louisa ; who again urged her friend to accompany her.

Mary, although in much better spirits, positively refused her request ; but on hearing the company from Killarney were all gone, except Lady Rumbold, she promised, if Louisa would return for her, to go down in the evening to the drawing-room, but desired her not to mention her intention.

Louisa then hastened to the dining-room, and found a place left for her next Listowel. They were all eager to hear her report of Mary.

She represented that the shock fell very much on her spirits, and that when allowed a little time to compose herself, she would be quite well. As Louisa spoke, she gave a glance at Villars, to see how he took her observa-

tions: he caught her eye, and coloured like scarlet, seeming to forget that he was at the foot of the table, and a servant waiting at his elbow for beef.

Mr. Stockdale observing him, remarked sarcastically—"Miss Listowel is not the only one engaged in that unlucky adventure who requires time for composure."

Poor Villars felt the bitterness of this remark more keenly, when, on looking up, he observed the grave looks of Mr. Listowel and his son; and on his addressing Talbot,—his favourite Talbot would scarcely speak to him.

He felt undeserving of these cold, disdainful looks. The consciousness of having in every instance performed his duty now supported him. He considered Mary's predilection for him, as a mere childish fancy, which, from the fickleness of her temper, he knew would, if they did not violently oppose, soon die away: he did not de-

spair (if allowed access to her as usual), of making her sensible of the glaring impropriety of her conduct. But he knew from the obstinacy and wilfulness of her temper, that opposition would cause dreadful scenes. He likewise thought he could no longer continue an inmate of Listowel Park.—In justice to himself he would leave it the next morning, and not remain a moment longer than he could avoid, subjected to the display of their injurious suspicions.

The conversation turned on general topics; Mr. Kelly bore his part. His reverend appearance, and cheerful, simple manners, impressed every one in his favour; and assisted in dispelling the gloom which Mary's conduct had caused. Listowel considered company this day as the greatest acquisition, particularly as Lady Rumbold and other strangers were present.

Poor Louisa had not yet recovered

her spirits. The humiliating scene of the morning had given her the severest mortification; and now, to add to her vexation, she found that Talbot, although seated by her, scarcely spoke, and evidently appeared anxious to avoid her. This surprise swallowed up every other! ‘Could Talbot be so cold—so negligent! It must on her part,’ she said, mentally, ‘be fancy.’ To bring it to proof, she tried to engage his attention; and ventured to ask him why he had left them so abruptly in the morning. He pleaded business; and said—“He left the ladies so well attended, that he did not flatter himself his absence could have been noticed.”

This was spoken in a quick short manner; so unlike his usual way of addressing her, that Louisa could scarcely suppress her rising emotion. ‘Now, indeed,’ thought she, ‘am I forlorn and despised! His horror of me, I suppose, is as strong as Mr. Listowel’s.

What crime can my wretched parents have committed to cover their miserable child with such obloquy! Ah! there is one face here that will never turn away from me!—one countenance that will always beam on me with affection and with pleasure!’ She raised her heavy eyes to look on that beloved countenance, and met his eye fondly gazing on her. With the greatest anxiety he had for some time observed her changing colour; and was uneasy at the paleness that now spread over her face: he feared, from the heaviness of her eyes and the whiteness of her lips, that she was near fainting. He still watched her in silence, lest he should draw the eyes of the company towards her; but now that she looked at him so mournfully, he could not longer refrain from speaking, and asked her to take a glass of wine. Listowel helped her. Her hand trembled. He was shocked to see how very ill she looked; and was going to

—“Pray take no notice; I shall be well presently.”

Louisa was not sorry when Lady Elizabeth withdrew from the dinner table, and gave her permission to go to Mary's apartment. But, thinking it necessary to compose her own mind before she could assist in tranquillising her friend's, first went to her room; where, giving way to her grief in a passion of tears, she recalled to her remembrance every word Listowel had uttered in their conference of the morning. This, instead of composing her, considerably added to the trepidation of her spirits. Her good sense at length pointed out to her the folly of indulging in grief; particularly at such a time, when called on by her young friend for advice and sympathy. Condemning herself severely for being so selfishly absorbed by her own mortifications, she, humbly kneeling down,

prayed to her heavenly Father to grant her resignation and fortitude, acknowledging his mercy in thus drawing her to himself. She arose more composed; reflecting that the Almighty chastens those he loves; and that no crime of her parents' could separate her from her Redeemer's love.

She now made preparations for returning that night with Mr. Kelly; reflecting, that she could not, after Mr. Listowel's behaviour, remain there any longer; and felt almost happy at the idea of again putting on her humble clothes, and leaving in this splendid mansion, her finery and her cares.

At length, having made up her parcel, and feeling her mind calm, she hastened to Mary's apartment.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Yet, this tall elm, but for his vine (he said)
Had stood neglected, and a barren shade !
And this fair vine, but that her arms surround
Her married elm, had crept along the ground !”

LOUISA found her lovely friend anxiously expecting her. “ I long, my dearest Miss Kelly !” said she, tenderly embracing her, “ to tell you how barbarously Villars has behaved !”

She then led her to the sofa ; telling her she regarded her as an old friend, and that her affectionate gentle manners, entirely won her confidence. “ But, my friend !” continued Mary, blushing, “ I am afraid you will think me very young to think of lovers. Have you had any yet ?”

“ No, indeed ! What an extraordinary question to ask me !” said Louisa.

“ Oh, I suppose in this retired part of the world you do not often meet fashionable young men! It has not been so with me,” said Mary, “ although seldom brought forward;—yet, when I did emerge from the school-room, I constantly met the handsomest and gayest young men! and then—do not, my dear, think me too forward—my governess would say what a good match such and such a gentleman would be for me: sometimes she would choose my husband from the best dancing men—when she thought I was not sufficiently attentive to *Monsieur Quadrille*; and then, again, when she thought I was careless in my dress, she endeavoured to make some fop the object of my fancy; hoping, to gain his approbation, I would correct my fault, and dress with more care. She could not even desire me to hold up my head, without saying—‘ the colonel was come !’—In short, every fault in me was to be corrected by the hope and desire

of setting myself off—that was to be the end of my existence!—Of course she had no influence over me. I despised the meanness of wishing to attract ; and, lest I should be suspected of acting from such a motive, I became intractable ; my natural obstinacy of character strengthened, and became habitual. I do not think I should have acquired any accomplishment, but that I was attended by masters who raised my emulation, by relating what young ladies of my own age performed ; together with a natural taste for the fine arts, and a wish to please my mother, who appeared so very much gratified at my success. From what I have told you, you may judge of my delight in leaving this odious governess, and accompanying mamma here. But still her evil genius pursues me ! She told me Mr. Stockdale would be a desirable match for me ; and that I ought to act so and so, to gain him or Mr. Talbot. This

mean, artful advice, has made me feel repugnant to both : and, in short, to all men but—Villars !—Do not start, and look at me with such amazement !—Is he not in every respect superior to the men here—except in not having a fortune ?—therefore he must be considered as a bad match for Miss Listowel ! This was in my eyes a great charm, as no interested motive could impel me to please him, or could be attributed to me. I knew, from the strictness of his principles, that he never would seek to gain me ! I was certain from his lips I should hear truth undisguised, and see his character such as it really was. Thus, predisposed to admire him, was it any wonder that the friend of my early youth should become the chosen of my heart ? Yes, my dear Louisa ! I am not ashamed to own it ; I should be an ingrate were it otherwise !—for, am I not indebted to him for more than life—for my notions of right and wrong ? He is the only person that

ever treated me as a rational—an accountable being!”

“Do you think he returns your love? Has he declared any attachment for you?” enquired her sister.

“Never! But, as I said, his principles would for ever prevent his doing so; he would esteem it the height of ingratitude towards my parents!—But, surely,” continued Mary, looking doubtingly at Louisa, “he cannot despise me!—me, whom he has known from my birth!—Surely, I must have twined round his heart, as the tender ivy does round the stately oak, until at length it becomes a body with it, almost a part of the tree! This idea occurred to me this morning, when he seated me on a bench under the shade of a large oak tree, to recover from a faintishness. I drew his attention towards it; and told him to observe what a thickness the ivy had acquired; and that it never could be separated from the oak without destroying it altogether: which would be a

pity ; for he must acknowledge that the ivy's rich green foliage added to the beauty of the tree, particularly in the Winter, when its own leaves were gone. He looked at me much surprised ; and, after pausing a moment, said my remark was a just one ; and that he was glad I was so far recovered as to be alive to the beauties of nature.

“ Perhaps, I replied, I should not be so ; but that I am interested strongly, from a comparison that strikes me, between this very stately oak—the pride of the forest—and a gentleman that superintended the education of a young female, who has clung to him for support and direction ; and now, like the ivy that shows its gratitude by spreading its beautiful foliage, she would enrich him with her wealth ! She finds that, like the ivy, let her size and strength increase ever so largely, still she must cling to the oak : or, otherwise, she must fall down and perish !

“ I held down my head ; shame over-

whelmed me—I was all in a tremor, and in despair at what I had uttered, lest he should despise and reject me : but again I thought that were impossible ; that it must be my odious fortune which kept him at a distance, and made him treat me with icy coldness. He continued silent ; and at length I ventured to ask him what he thought of my simile. He paused for a moment, looking dreadfully annoyed.

“ ‘ It puzzles me,’ he said, ‘ how to answer you. In the first place, this oak, that engages so much of your attention, and is so ornamented by this beautiful ivy, so rich in its foliage—may, as I will show, lead you to moralize further.—Examine the oak’s branches ;—observe, from the tree’s great age, it has acquired a hardness ; the young ivy has made no impression on its impenetrable bark ; and that it never arrives to such a flourishing state as when twined round a younger tree ! See, for instance ; this elm yields to the pressure of the

ivy ; which, as it enlarges, sinks in its young branches ; and although they thus give way, they nevertheless support and cherish the ivy ; and are at length so bound up with it, that if you destroy one you destroy the other. How unlike the stiff and unbending oak !

“ I felt humbled. Still the idea of his acting from principle gave me fresh courage ; and I was about to reply, when he proposed, as I was so much recovered, that we should proceed forward.

“ I said, I feared he was impatient to leave me.

“ He looked very severe, and replied, with gravity, not while he could be serviceable to me ; otherwise he should think it improper to engross so much of my time ; and that he believed he had better hasten to the house, and send me my maid. ‘ Oh, I see Mr. Talbot coming—he is a very proper escort for you !’

“ I asked why he would not accompany me.

“ ‘When you understand more of the world,’ returned he, ‘you will perceive my motive. The world,’ he continued, colouring, ‘will not know that I have been to you as a parent, and feel for you a parental affection! They, at least the censorious, would suppose me villain enough to aim at raising a softer interest in your bosom!’

“ You have, without aim, done that already! said I, not daring to look up. Who cares for what the world says? Surely my devotedness to you that saved my life can be no crime?

“ ‘Alas!’ said he, calling me *poor child!*—(was that to be borne?)—‘you do not understand the import of your words. With me, however, you are safe. Pray compose yourself! I must leave you, for here comes Mr. Stockdale; were he to find me thus alone with you, he might be guilty of some sneering remark that I should find difficult not to resent.’

“ Here he left me, fortunately. Stock-

dale, as expected, made sarcastic observations, hoping he did not interrupt a *tête-a-tête*; which, he said, were he to judge from its lasting so long, must have been very interesting!

“ Now, my dear Miss Kelly! I have told you all; and beg your candid opinion.”

“ Alas! why will you not consult some one more experienced?” replied Louisa, “ more acquainted with the world! But, since you do consult me, I must remind you that the Almighty orders children to obey their parents! Surely, if it were not for the distance fortune has placed betwixt you and Mr. Villars, the glaring impropriety of being the first to declare attachment would shock you! Forgive me, my dear friend! for speaking so plainly; consider, were I to act otherwise I should ill deserve the confidence you honour me with!”

“ Why did I consult you?” replied Mary, angrily. “ Are you too in a league with my parents? My mother, like you,

seemed to sympathize in my affliction merely to betray. Did she not send you to me?"

"She did: but made no observation, excepting that you were not well. She and your father looked grave and unhappy: they scarcely spoke during dinner."

"How did Villars look?"

"Equally so: indeed the whole party seemed changed!—Lady Rumbold in vain tried to keep up conversation—there was a gloom over every one—the spirit of the party fled with you." Louisa continued—"Consider, my dear friend! what you owe your parents, who have kindly fostered you from your early birth! Oh, your obligations to them are incalculable!—and could you repay them by such a dereliction of every duty?—Oh, you cannot persist in such conduct!—duty, delicacy forbid it!—what has passed may appear but as the ebullition of your gratitude for his services. Pray come

down to the drawing-room, and endeavour to regain your cheerfulness !”

“ I will follow your advice in going down stairs ; further all you have advanced is romantic rodomontade !—I own no obligation to my parents for their care of me ; it was their duty, their pleasure—their pride ! The same motives operate in choosing me a husband.—They would give me to Mr. Stockdale—because he has showy equipages—a fine place—a large estate—with plenty of game ;—and to crown all, keeps a pack of hounds—a most desirable match ! No country gentleman, and my father is one surely in the fullest sense of the word, would reject such an offer for his daughter !—And the daughter is likewise expected to be caught by these attributes, although sporting has made no part of her education ; and his equipages and fortune can afford her but small gratification, when he has not a mind in unison with hers !—In

short, I do not like him.—I will, as the song says, ‘Sigh and live single;’ unless they allow me to marry Villars!”

Louisa judging further remonstrance would be ill received, followed her in silence down stairs, pitying her as a beautiful overgrown baby, who would not listen to reason, and was mostly governed by whim and fancy. ‘Oh!’ thought she, ‘this ought to be a lesson for me!’

On entering the drawing-room, every one’s attention they found was occupied by Lady Rumbold’s playing with her dog, and displaying his wonderful sagacity. Every eye was turned towards her, excepting Lady Elizabeth’s, who was anxiously on the watch for Mary’s appearance; and now, rejoiced to see her looking so calm, was happy to converse with her a few moments before her presence was observed; and lest she should be overpowered with inquiries, at once answered for her, say-

ing, she was quite well, and ready to play that fine lesson of Mozart's they had admired so much: observing, in an under tone to her daughter, that she would feel less annoyance on the return of the gentlemen, if employed.

The music was delightful to Louisa; it soothed her perturbed feelings, and prevented her from dwelling on Listowel's strange conduct.

Villars did not return with the gentlemen. Mary was uneasy at his absence, and out of all patience with Stockdale, who stationed himself by her side. He was become particularly disagreeable to her, by his sarcastic remarks on her favourite; and she would have quitted the piano-forte, but that her father requested she would indulge him with one of his favourite pieces. She complied: Louisa was requested to preside at the tea-table. She sat there alone, and sent the tea on trays around to the company. Presently

Lady Rumbold sent Talbot to her for a second cup of tea. He was now forced to look at her to address her. He saw there was a flush about her lovely eyes, as if she had been weeping: he heard it observed she had not been well at dinner, and was shocked to see her now looking so pale and languid: not even his jealousy, the bitter feelings he had endured at seeing her, as he thought, so entirely engrossed by Villars and Edward, could steel his heart against her, or prevent his feeling the strongest anxiety for her happiness. She gave him the tea: he said he would return; he did so, and taking a chair near her, inquired affectionately how she was, and expressed his fears of her not being well. Louisa assured him she was in perfect health; and added, smiling, that she wanted a friend more, than a physician. He hoped she never doubted she had a warm friend in him.

Louisa acknowledged, that now, for the first time since she knew him, she had doubts, and that idea had considerably increased her uneasiness. Her eyes filled with tears, and she busied herself with the duties of the tea-table to conceal her perturbation.

Talbot perceived her emotion, and allowing her time to recover, assured her that she knew him but little, if she ever supposed him for a moment indifferent to what related to her.

She acknowledged she had ever, in all her difficulties, found him her steady friend, and as she had that morning experienced several mortifications, she naturally looked towards him for consolation. She was conscious he could not be aware of this, and added, smiling—"Perhaps my wounded feelings have made me touchy, but, at all events, I am happy now to find you the same."

He requested to know what made

her unhappy ; that he had supposed, so attended and sought after as she was, his company could not be missed ; then added—"Since we are confessing, I will acknowledge I felt very severely your giving up your old friend for new acquaintances. Pray forgive me, and prove that I have judged you harshly, by telling me the cause of your mortification. Treat me with the confidence one so interested in your happiness deserves!"

"I feel strongly tempted to do so," said Louisa, "but at present fear being overheard ; that, indeed, would be more mortifying than I could well bear."

"Presently I think we may find an opportunity," said Talbot ; "and then I promise to be your friend, although you should even require the sacrifice of my fondest hopes !"

To her great relief he then left her, as she felt her agitation increasing, and feared the curiosity of the Belmonts

might be excited by their earnest conversation. ‘What could he mean!’ thought she. ‘Can his serving me occasion him any sacrifice?’ She condemned herself in promising to communicate her uneasiness; considering she could never enter into such a mortifying explanation;—perhaps it might lower her in his esteem;—and besides, it was acting in direct contradiction to Mr. Kelly’s orders. She lulled her conscience, by considering that to a parent only was she bound to passive obedience; and that, vast as her obligations were to Mr. Kelly, still neither his commands, nor the injunctions of a stranger should, in the present instance, deprive her of the counsel of Talbot, whom she relied on so entirely; and who, she hoped, from his living so much in the world, might perhaps assist her in developing this mystery, that, like a heavy cloud, hung over her and damped all her joys.

Mary, during this time, had been kept on hard duty at the piano forte ; and now becoming restless and impatient, called on Anne Belmont to take her place, as her father still continued to call for music. She suspected this sudden fancy for music was a manœuvre to keep her quiet ; and therefore felt a sort of triumph in placing Miss Belmont at the piano forte, to which, she knew, he could make no objection. She sat down by Louisa, and asked her in a low earnest voice—"Where is he ?"

"There !" said Louisa, pointing to Talbot.

"No ! Are you blind, my dear friend ? That is Talbot !"

"I thought you had been inquiring for him," replied Louisa.

"Well, for that tell-tale blush," said Mary, smiling, "I excuse you. Now tell me what you have heard of Villars ?"

"I did not hear his name mentioned," said the elder sister.

“ Unkind Louisa! Alas! a zealous friend is not to be found!—You forget my anxiety: whilst the idea that you were at liberty to serve me gave me patience, or I never should so tamely have remained at the piano forte, I hoped you would have rewarded my complying with my father’s teasing requests for music, by making every inquiry for Villars.”

Louisa tried in vain to pacify Mary, who would only be appeased by her finding out where Villars was; and as she objected to inquiring from the gentlemen, requested she would ask the servants. Louisa positively refused, and gave her great offence, by telling her plainly, she feared her anxiety about him would attract notice, and render her very conspicuous; at which Mary was highly offended. Louisa left her, lest it should be supposed she approved of conduct so unfeminine.

Mary dreading to make inquiries in

Stockdale's presence, went to the library, and rung the bell for her maid.

Mrs. Tippet obeyed her summons; she could, however, give no information respecting Mr. Villars, and was therefore sent in quest of intelligence. She soon returned, having met his servant in the hall, who informed her his master was in his own room, busily engaged in writing letters.

Mary now returned to the drawing-room, hoping he would appear there when his letters were written; and again taking a seat by Louisa, to Talbot's great annoyance, as he had been persuading her to make him the promised confidence. She likewise was grieved at the interruption, knowing Mr. Kelly would return early to the Glebe, and despaired of having another opportunity of consulting Talbot; but as she had some doubts of the propriety of the measure, she reconciled her mind to the disappointment, and told the cu-

rate her intention of returning with him, at which he appeared highly gratified. She then went to take leave of Lady Elizabeth, who would not hear of her going. Mary almost cried, and wondered she could be so ill-natured as to think of leaving them, when their stay in the country was to be so very short.

Listowel was a silent observer of this little altercation, and could not forbear smiling:—‘How powerful,’ thought he, ‘is nature!—how irresistible her impulses!—They know not that their blood flows in her veins—they have seen her only since yesterday; and yet she has already twined round their hearts, and they cannot bear to part with her!’

Lady Elizabeth called on him to interfere, and wondered he did not try his influence with Miss Kelly.

Thus called on, he could do no less than beg of her to remain. She looked at him rather haughtily; and address-

ing herself to Lady Elizabeth, replied, she could not refuse her, or Miss Listowel, and that she was highly flattered by their wish to keep her.

The curate therefore bid her good night: he was chagrined at leaving her behind, in consequence of her looking so ill, and so depressed; and felt convinced something unpleasant must have occurred.

Mary, who was anxiously expecting Villars, never left Louisa, and entirely precluded all conversation with Talbot; he, however, found an opportunity of extracting a promise from her of meeting him the next morning, at eight o'clock, in the shrubbery walk leading to the lake.

Mrs. Belmont had observed them conversing frequently during the course of the evening, and was very restless, that a *nobody*, as she styled Louisa, should engross the attention of such a man as Talbot: 'Whilst,' she said, 'he passes

over my daughters ; Anne or *Car.* may *whistle for him !* Seeing that he had left Louisa, she bustled up to her, in order to give her good advice.

“ It is *mighty* foolish of you, my dear ! to talk so much to that young man, for I can assure you he is engaged ; and besides, he never would bestow his hand without a fine fortune, or a great connexion !—Yours, my dear, may be very good people, decent, and respectable ;—but you know its not that *we* look to—something stylish *we* seek for our children. Now for instance, there’s my Anne ; all the young men of consideration would like to be the Dean of R—’s son-in-law, and brother-in-law to Sir Offingdon Wilmot. Upon my credit, my dear, every word I tell you is truth ! I should not mention this, but to show you what most influences *us* in marrying *our* children !”

Mary laughed. “ The inducements you hold out, madam, are certainly

very strong; but pardon me for differing from you, as I consider, in a partner for life, the advantages of education, sound principles, and good sense, beyond all others; and absolutely necessary to make the marriage state happy."

"That may be all very fine in talking," said Mrs. Belmont; "but I think a man would show a great want of sense in marrying for such *low nonsense*.—It is not the fashion *now-a-days*:—folks are wiser; instances are very rare of such nonsense; except among forward girls of fifteen, or raw youths that have scarcely arrived at cravats!"

Mary coloured, and laughed to hide her mortification, supposing the sarcasm directed to her. She drew Louisa away, judging, from her varying complexion, how keenly she felt Mrs. Belmont's impertinence, but still kept near

the door, anxiously watching for Villars to make his appearance.

At length he did appear, looking very pale and ill. Mary called to him, but he passed on to Lady Elizabeth, who looked stately, and studious to avoid turning her head towards him. He addressed himself to Listowel, who viewed him with haughty indignation. They spoke for some time in a low voice. Mary, from the distance she was at, could not hear a word, although all attention. Her father perceiving her anxiety and change of colour, called her over—she came, delighted at being summoned whilst he was talking with Villars, and drew from it the happiest conclusion. But what was her astonishment to find her lover walk away on her approach. Listowel drew her towards him, so as that she should turn her back to the door, and detained her in conversation until Villars had spoken to Lady Elizabeth, and quitted the room; which he did without Mary's

knowledge, the door having been left open from the heat of the weather.

Mary grew impatient at her father detaining her so long. He made her relate the history of the escape she had in the morning, and listened, with evidently repressed indignation, to her effusions of gratitude: still his listening to her at all gave her hopes. He observed, that she had not yet recovered her looks, and recommended her to retire for the night, and to take Louisa with her, who, he said, looked as pale and ill as she did. Glad of an apology, she quitted him, and looking in vain around for Villars, again seated herself by Louisa, determining to await his return. Great was her dismay on hearing from her friend, that he had already wished her good night, and apologized for retiring so early: Mary therefore followed her father's advice, accompanied by Louisa.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Dear Inis, wouldst thou but believe
A heart that knows not to deceive,
 (Alas ! nor longer free ;)
That faithful heart should truly tell
The secret charm, the tender spell,
 That bound it first to thee.

CAMOENS.

THE next morning, Talbot arose at an early hour, to keep his appointment with Louisa. He had slept but little ; uneasy reflections banished repose. He feared he must either give up Louisa, or fail in duty to his father, with whom he had always been on the best terms ; and, except on the subject of matrimony, had ever found him a most indulgent parent, and extremely liberal in supplying him with money ; which

naturally led the young man to suppose, that a large fortune was not absolutely necessary for his wife ; and that, perhaps, if his father were to see Louisa (whom he considered as the most perfect person he knew), he might probably highly approve of her, and think her every way so qualified to ensure his son's happiness, as to resign, for her sake, the splendid alliance he was forming. But still it was a question with him, if Louisa really preferred him—or if she merely looked upon him as the friend of her youth. He was all anxiety to hear what she had to tell him, and determined to serve her ; and even sacrifice his own happiness to ensure hers. But, should he be so blessed as to find her affections disengaged, he would not, he was resolved, declare his passion, or make any overture in direct opposition to his father's will, although he likewise was resolved not to make the sacrifice his father demanded.

At the hour agreed on, he saw, from the bower, Louisa coming down the shrubbery walk : he hastened to meet her, and led her to the very seat she had occupied the day before, during her conference with Listowel.

Talbot could not see her countenance, as her veil was down ; but her manner was unassured and timid. He tried to encourage her, although he himself found it difficult to recover his self-possession, in consequence of her cold, estranged manner—so unlike the innocent freedom of her usual behaviour.

After a pause of some moments, Louisa said—“Perhaps I am wrong in applying for advice to one so young ; and what apology can I make, when my excellent father is so capable of advising me, and I rely so entirely on his sincerity and truth, that he is to me as a second conscience!—Allow me for once to be whimsical and changeable!—Forgive me for bringing you out so early.”

“Do not, my dear Louisa! treat your old friend so formally—consider me as your brother!—Have you not known me from your earliest youth. Did you ever find me undeserving of your confidence? Never, my friend! therefore consult me in your present dilemma. Perhaps, from my living more in the world, I may be better qualified to advise you.”

“That has been the apology I made to myself,” returned Louisa, “for consulting you. But, I fear I have been more influenced by the relief I find in telling you my grievances: and yet, now I feel shocked at my precipitancy, and know not how to begin!”

He endeavoured to re-assure her; and begged she would not further delay gratifying his curiosity, lest they should be interrupted; and, as he was on that day to quit the Park, some time might elapse before they could again enjoy such a *tête-à-tête*!

The idea of losing him so soon made

her forget her embarrassment. Throwing back her veil, and looking at Talbot with the most innocent tenderness ; she said with earnestness of manner—" I hope you are not going to leave the kingdom !"

" No," said he ; " I go to Longwood, to my father, and purpose remaining with him for some time :—think not of me ; tell me of yourself !"

" Well, I see I must begin," said she, colouring deeply. " May I not rely on your candour, and on your telling me the whole truth—even, should it be of such a nature as to wound me to the very soul ?"

" I promise you !" said Talbot. " What am I to imagine from this mystery ? Tell me quickly !"

" Do you know who I am ?" inquired Louisa.

" Not exactly ; further than that I have been told you are an orphan relative of Mr. Kelly's," returned her lover.

“ My parents are alive !—I do not know who they are, and fear—no ! I cannot tell you what I fear !” said the agitated girl—“ it is too horrible to mention !—But, I will tell you what has led me to form this mortifying conclusion.”

She then related faithfully the conversation she had with Listowel ; omitting only the part in which Talbot was mentioned.

He was very much shocked ; but every idea, and every fear, were lost in one powerful sensation of joy, at finding her still disengaged ; and that no heroic sacrifice of his inclinations would be demanded.

The perturbation and anxiety strongly depicted in her countenance whilst making this recital, and the eagerness with which she now awaited his answer to her often repeated question of—“ If, indeed, he thought she could be the offspring of criminals ?” at length brought him to himself, and somewhat sobered

his transport. He now dreaded the possibility of her conjectures being true: then, indeed, there would be an impassable gulph between them; as he would sooner die than sully the honour of his house, handed down pure and unstained by a long train of ancestry. He felt wretched, as if thrown headlong from a height.

From this awful silence poor Louisa supposed her worst fears verified; and covering her face with both her hands, burst into tears—bitter tears, that she could no longer restrain. “Oh! my conjecture is but too true!” exclaimed she; “or you would speak, and not remain silent, with such horror depicted in your countenance! Speak, dear Mr. Talbot!—say the worst!—I have firmness to bear all short of this horrible suspense!”

This tender appeal brought him to himself; he took her hand, and tenderly holding it in his, conjured her to be composed.

“Never!” she replied; “until I know who my parents are, and what crime they have committed. When I know the worst, I shall exert all my fortitude and resignation; but until then, I must be a prey to anxious suspense; and even you cannot console me!”

“Why, my dear friend!” said Talbot, “will you thus give way to terrible forebodings? I cannot bear to see your mind thus distracted with gloomy suspicion, when I can trace no plan for gaining information; and am as ignorant of who your parents are as yourself.”

“Indeed! can I believe you?” she said. “Your look of horror went to my very soul!”

“It was merely caused by my sympathy in your distress. I give you my word I know nothing of your family but what you have yourself told me!”

“I must believe you; you never deceived me! But what is to become of me?—how can I live in this state of ignorance, and under such a cloud?—Will

you still venture to be my friend?"—she asked dejectedly, looking down.

"Oh, my Louisa!—how can you ask such a question? Do you think," he said, with an impassioned glance, "my love for you depends on circumstances over which you could have no control? Oh, no! you have that nobleness of soul which must ever command the love and respect of those who know you!"

Louisa tried to reply; but her quivering lip prevented utterance; and hiding her face with her hand, she vainly endeavoured to conceal her strong emotion.

Talbot was dreadfully shocked, and found himself impelled by every feeling of love, generosity, and pity, to declare himself her lover and guardian. "Do not weep, my own Louisa!—In me you will find a friend!—a lover! Forget your family; conscious of their demerit, they will never claim you! Say, my Louisa! that you have not been insensible to my long tried and ardent attach-

ment. Oh, say, that you will now, and for ever, place your happiness in my keeping! You do not speak!—relieve my doubts—my fears! Has Villars, or young Listowel, raised in your gentle bosom a stronger interest than I can inspire?—Oh, speak to me!”

Overcome with astonishment, with shame, with admiration, she hid her tearful blushing face; and when she could speak, exclaimed:—“ Noble, generous Talbot!—to your compassion for me you would sacrifice all!—your ambition, your fame—and, must I add—your duty to your father!—Oh, that is a sacrifice I can never accept!—oh, no! I will never be the cause of your incurring his displeasure;—he who has guided you from your youth up; and to whom, under heaven, you owe your being!”

“ My father is a most indulgent parent; he may yet bless our union! You are mistaken, my Louisa! if you suppose

you owe this declaration to mere compassion ; or to any sudden impulse." He took her hand and pressed it to his heart ; whilst love and affection were so strongly expressed in his handsome eyes, fondly turned towards her, that Louisa could no longer doubt his love. She felt it, like a talisman, at once remove all her weight of care, and fill her with heart-felt pleasure. She could scarcely believe her senses, that she was indeed the object of Talbot's attachment, whom, from her earliest infancy, she had looked up to as the first of created beings. At the same moment, she felt herself imperatively called on not to suffer this attachment to lead him into error ; and she doubted her strength of mind, in being able to resist his importunities. He continued to urge his suit, whilst her fears for her own steadiness increased ; and when she could speak, with a blushing cheek, and an averted eye, she requested he would leave her ; and so

earnestly, that he promised to comply, if she would say when they should meet again.

A quick step in the gravel walk alarmed them.

Louisa now eagerly intreated he would go ; and claimed his friendship, which at present she would only accept. She promised, when he had examined every clue within his reach, for the discovery of her parents, to meet him again, hoping to profit by his advice ; and hastily begged he would remember the misery and perplexity she should experience whilst in this state of ignorance. He interrupted her impatiently ; but she stopped him, fearing more protestations ; when, hearing steps, fast approaching, he hastened down the walk towards the lake.

Talbot was scarcely gone ere Mary appeared in sight. She caught a glimpse of his figure when retreating. He was about the same height of Villars ; and

her jealous fears immediately whispered to her that it must be he. She therefore bitterly reproached Louisa; accusing her of artifice: saying, she was now aware of her motive in preaching to her on obedience and modesty; which she was very sorry the preacher could not practice. Thus, poor Mary ran on with the utmost vehemence; until, at length, quite exhausted, she threw herself on the bench, and sobbed and cried like an infant. Louisa dreaded she would work herself into a fit. Her attempts to undeceive her were very ill received; and only appeared to increase the paroxysm of rage which deformed her beautiful countenance. While they were in this dilemma, Edward returned up the gravel walk leading from the lake. On seeing him, Mary's sobs ceased; and almost screaming, she asked him if he had not met Villars in that walk.

Edward smiled.—“That would be impossible; as, I am happy to tell you,

he left us this morning at five o'clock. I lent him my tilbury; my servant accompanies him as far as Tralee, where he will meet the mail-coach for Dublin."

"Will you, my dearest Miss Kelly! forgive me?" said Mary, throwing her arms round Louisa's neck. "I was certain that I saw Villars leave you, and that he fled at my approach, from his total disregard of me. Will you, my sweetest girl! pardon me, and be still my friend?"

"Is it possible," said Edward, "that you are really making such a fool of yourself about that fellow?—I could not have believed he could be so base and dishonourable as to encourage you in this disgraceful passion!"

Her tears now flowed afresh, and when they would allow her to speak, she continued—"Ill natured, cruel Edward!—I suppose you have affronted him, and sent him away. When did he

say he would return?—Oh! when shall I see him again?”

“Never! with my consent,” said Edward; his face reddening with passion. “For shame, Mary! Conquer this disgraceful attachment for a puppy that could thus betray the confidence reposed in him; and, under colour of instructing the brother, seduce the sister’s affections! How could he ever have the assurance to declare himself your lover!”

“Do not vent your rage, Edward, in my presence—leave me to my parents! But, lest you should have words with your much injured friend, I must tell you that he has never made love to me!”

“Good Heavens! what is it I hear!—Have you been,” he exclaimed, angrily, “like a forsaken old damsel, making love to the poor man?—Oh, Mary! your conduct mars the face of modesty!—I blush for you!—I thought you incapable of such forwardness!—

That impertinent Villars ! However, he knows my opinion of him : I refused seeing him, either last night or this morning. I returned his letter unopened ; and sent him such a message that he can never forgive."

" What reply did he make ?" asked Mary.

" None ; he left the house without taking further notice : a damning proof of his guilt !"

" Guilt !—guilt !" reiterated Mary. " What an unnatural brother !" and she cried and sobbed so violently, that she fell into fits. Edward was in despair, accusing himself of unnecessary harshness. Louisa did not know how to manage her. They were afraid to bring her to the house, lest they should meet any of the family, and alarm Lady Elizabeth, who must now be on the watch for them, as it was long past the breakfast hour. They were endeavouring to pacify her, and the fit was beginning to

subside, when they were called by Listowel. They saw him from a distance, with Stockdale and Lady Rumbold, calling out to Edward that breakfast was ready. Edward entreated Louisa would meet them, return with them to the house, and apologize for his sister's non-appearance at the breakfast-table. She did so;—Lady Rumbold and Mr. Stockdale returned with her, while Listowel went on to see his daughter.

CHAPTER XIX.

“ I pray you tell me, what is the whole world to the heart of man without love ? It is like a magic lanthorn without light ; scarcely do you put the little lamp into it, when the various figures appear on the whitened wall, and if the effects of love, only resemble shadows which pass away ; yet, still they procure us happiness ; when, like children, we suffer ourselves to be delighted with the brilliant phantom.”

LADY ELIZABETH'S uneasiness was evident, on Lady Rumbold's returning without Mary ; and still more so, when Listowel and Edward entered, making an apology for her not appearing at breakfast.

No questions were asked, they tried to converse on general subjects ; but there was such a gloom on the countenances of the Listowels, that the company with difficulty supported a spiritless conversation.

No party for the morning was formed; and Lady Rumbold declared her intention of returning to Killarney. This proposal met with feeble opposition; and at length, to the great relief of the Listowels, it was arranged, that all their company, excepting Louisa and Talbot, should accompany her to Rumbold Castle, the latter having declined the invitation, as he was going to Longwood. Louisa refused to leave her young friend, for which Lady Elizabeth thanked her, and said, she was certain her daughter would be highly gratified by her company.

Accordingly, Louisa went to Mary's dressing-room, and found her walking up and down, in the greatest agitation, her breakfast remaining untouched. Both her father and her brother had spoken harshly to her: she was naturally self-willed, and now, for the first time in her life, meeting with opposition, it rendered her invincibly obsti-

nate. She considered her father's grave admonition cruel in the extreme, and that nothing could, or should, conquer the ardent attachment she felt for Villars; whom she considered almost as a superior being; giving herself, not a little credit, for loving ardently one so much her senior; and considering, that although her friends might appear to condemn her through pride and selfishness, yet, in their hearts they must admire her discernment.

She repeated to Louisa every word her father said; who, fearing she would be again exhausted, tried, with the utmost tenderness, to prevail on her to eat a little. Finding her growing calm, she ventured to hint, that until Villars declared himself her lover, she should not so positively assert her affections were engaged to him.

“Oh!” replied Mary, “a false sense of honour will prevent him from ever declaring his attachment to me;—but

I am sure he loves me,—and have a thousand reasons for supposing it.”

At about one o'clock, they saw from the window, the Belmonts, &c. depart with Lady Rumbold, for Rumbold Castle.

They had not been long gone, when Lady Elizabeth came to inquire for Mary; her father, she said, wished to speak to her in his study. But on seeing her appear so weak and exhausted, she sent Louisa to Listowel, to request he would come to his daughter.

Louisa found the unhappy father pacing up and down his study; she timidly delivered her message. He gave her the kindest reception; and said he was rejoiced she was sent; as he wished much to speak to her of Mary; and to gather from her, if Villars had made any declaration of love to his daughter: her denying that he did, was, he supposed, to screen him from his anger; not thinking it possible

Mary could of herself fancy him her lover.

Louisa felt very unwilling to speak on the subject; but thus called on, she could not refuse; and therefore acknowledged, that from what she could learn, Mr. Villars never professed an attachment to his daughter; and that she believed his silence added to her unhappiness.

“That proves him to be not the less a scoundrel!” exclaimed Listowel; “for although he has made no direct declaration, yet he must have taken the greatest pains secretly to gain her affections. Otherwise, it is impossible so young a girl should have a passion for one so much her senior! My child is too modest, too bashful, thus unsought to be won.—Without the greatest art on his side, Mary, who is all animation, and has buoyant spirits, would have been disgusted with his melancholy long face, and grave methodical

manner.—But his vanity—I should say his villainy—shall be chastised !”

He continued, after a pause—“ We must now lecture poor Mary ! Be on the watch, and when we leave her room hasten to her, for I fear we must be harsh. If possible, make her more reasonable, and tell her how derogatory this passion is to her.”

He then left her, and Louisa remained in the study : she took up a book, and sat down in the recess of the window. She had not been reading long, when Talbot and Edward came in together. Edward said—“ Here, Talbot, is pen, ink, and paper ; you may write your letters undisturbed ; I will only take my gun, and then leave you.”

Talbot was seated with his back to the door of the adjoining room, which stood open. Louisa hoped to retire in there, unperceived by him : she was waiting for Edward to go, who, she supposed, would not stay a moment.

He took down his gun, prepared to charge it, and then apparently continued a conversation.

“ Now, as I was saying, I have not a doubt, from what you tell me of my father’s unhappiness, at my earnest conversation, and our own remarks, I have not a doubt on my mind;—she is certainly my sister !”

“ Villars, you say, had the same suspicion; and from every thing we can gather, I think,” returned Talbot, “ it most probable. Robert Belmont nearly told me so, just as he was stepping into his curricule for Rumbold Castle, looking very knowing, and hinted he was master of all the particulars.—Yet I would not place perfect reliance on his word; and when I consider her age,—she does not appear older than Miss Listowel;—your father a moral, religious man. We can form no surmise from her likeness to him, since she strongly resembles your mother.”

Poor Louisa was all this time in an agony. She instantly believed their supposition true:—the emotion Listowel frequently betrayed when conversing with her; and which he evidently endeavoured to suppress—all, all, fully brought the conviction to her breast, that she was indeed his child,—Edward her brother! Her delicate and pious mind recoiled with horror from such an idea;—all her airy dreams of being acknowledged by her parents, fled;—of finding them guiltless,—although perhaps, from untoward circumstances, not countenanced by their friends, until time should prove their innocence. She gave a heavy sigh, and feeling most dreadfully oppressed, wished to escape into the other room; as she considered remaining where she was highly improper; and equally so discovering to them that she had overheard their conversation. It would be so like claiming their pity, taking them unawares, and

not allowing them time to consult prudence in their conduct towards her. She therefore lost no time, lest they should change their position, and rising softly, glided in through the open door to the adjoining room. Their backs were still towards her, and they were engaged in such earnest conversation that they did not perceive her.

Louisa found she did not gain much by her change of situation; for although seated at the farthest end of the room, she could hear every word they said.

Edward was telling Talbot what a fancy his mother had taken to Louisa. It was more than probable she might accompany them to Dublin:—at least his mother had proposed it, but his father would not hear of it, and had positively refused his consent.—What could be his motive! Had he confessed to his mother who she was?—Who could her mother be!—Such a lovely

scion could not have sprung from a low and vulgar branch !

Talbot replied—"Our conjectures on this topic, my dear friend, must be idle, while the lips of those that can inform us are sealed.—However, my mind is made up:—this lovely wild flower must be mine!—transplanted into our house she will flourish, and be its chief ornament. If your family allow me to say she is one of yours—to claim her even as a distant relation will satisfy the public—and minute inquiry will be easily ward-ed off:—besides, her strong resemblance to your family will prevent its ever being doubted."

"I cannot tell you, my dear Talbot, how happy you make me ! I will speak to my father openly : tell him my suspicions ; and join with him, as soon as I am of age, in giving her as good a fortune as Mary."

"Generous Edward ! I do not desire a fortune.—She has long been the

first object of my affections; and but for the unpleasant manner in which I am situated with my father, I should before now have made my sentiments known. Poor Louisa! how unfortunate she was this morning!—and miserable to find some clue by which she could discover her parents!”

“The dear girl! I long to acknowledge her—to make myself an interest in her affectionate heart.—She will, I feel, be my dearest sister!—Mary is too lively and volatile for every-day life.”

“Then you do not think her peace of mind much endangered by her passion for Villars?” inquired Talbot.

“Hark! do you hear my mother’s bell ring a peal? There seems to be great commotion!”

Mrs. Tippet now burst into the room.—“Oh! Mr. Edward! come to your sister, she is in the *sturrucks*!—a dozen cannot manage her! I must run for hartshorn and water! For the love of

Heaven hasten to her! She is in her boudoir!"

Talbot offered his services, but Edward was unwilling his sister should be seen in that state, and therefore begged he would remain and finish his letter.

Poor Louisa felt herself all this time a complete prisoner—but not an unhappy one: for although she considered her situation as very forlorn, and was dreadfully shocked at the odium cast on her birth, yet her mind felt soothed when she found the two she most approved of were so warmly interested for her; and wondered at herself how she could feel so elated, when determined not to profit by Talbot's love, or Edward's generosity. Her mind felt in a chaos; she was trying to arrange her ideas, when Talbot, having finished his letter, came into the room to seek a book he had left that morning on the sofa.

He was surprised and overjoyed when

he found Louisa there. —“ Oh!” exclaimed he, “ how fortunate! I have been these last ten minutes planning how I should see you, as I have much to communicate.”

He seated himself by her on the sofa, dreading from the extreme flutter of her spirits, that she had overheard his conversation with Edward: however, he made no comment, and she requested he would proceed, lest they should be interrupted.

“ About two hours ago I walked towards the lake. Mr. Listowel and Mr. Kelly were standing near the boat, in deep conversation; and, from a few words that met my ear, I advanced, finding you were their subject. Mr. Kelly was sounding your praises; and observed, that he feared the taste you were now acquiring for company would hereafter be to you a source of unhappiness. On seeing me he was desirous of dropping the conversation. Mr. Listowel continued

it, entering warmly into your praise. Observing that I was silent, he accused me of want of discernment. I vindicated myself, by appealing to Mr. Kelly, who, I said, knew me to be one of your earliest friends—that I had your interest warmly at heart.—At present, I said, my chief anxiety was to find out who your parents were.—Mr. Kelly started; Mr. Listowel coloured like scarlet—I never in my life saw men more confused! I continued, and observed, the obscurity that was thrown on your birth, I saw made you very unhappy.”

“What did they reply? Did my father look very angry?” exclaimed Louisa; who had been listening with almost breathless attention, and now for the first time interrupted him.

“I then addressed myself to Mr. Kelly; and said, I supposed he could give some information on the subject, as surely he must know. He very properly called me to order; said I was

too abrupt, and that, on a subject on which he had given you so little information, asked what reason I had for supposing that he should be more communicative with me.

“I acknowledged my error, and said, my long attachment for you must plead my apology : that you had refused any answer to my offer of marriage until you had discovered who were your parents.—Both the gentlemen appeared highly gratified ; but at the same time Mr. Kelly approved of your determination : and said—It was correct, it was noble!—that your principles were strict, and that you always had acted up to them.

“Mr. Listowel said, in the present case he conceived you were stretching the point too far ; and he hoped you would not, like a heroine of romance, act on a delicacy, on a refined feeling, as if it were a principle.—‘She knows,’ continued he, ‘that her parents are

my friends, and that I would not allow her to form any alliance displeasing to them. I told her all this, and likewise that I know nothing would give them so much pleasure as her being married to Talbot.'

"I replied, that he misunderstood you.—That it was not on your own account you hesitated; but from the mystery attending your birth, you feared the alliance would reflect on me no honour, and perhaps disunite me for ever from my family—from my father!"

"Mr. Listowel looked agitated, and provoked; he mused awhile, and then observed—'Louisa has none of the thoughtless giddiness of youth.—She deserves to be told every thing—but—at present it cannot be.—I can only tell her, on the word of a gentleman, that she is, in point of birth and family, a match fit for any nobleman in the kingdom!—Her fortune may depend on circumstances; but she certainly will have

some. Tell her this from me; and that you are the man, of all others that I know, her parents are ambitious of giving her to: and,' said he, shaking me warmly by the hand, 'you are just the kind of man a father, anxious for his daughter's happiness, would entrust her to.'—Since such, my dear Louisa! is the opinion of the declared friend of your parents, you can surely refuse me no longer: opposition now, on your part, would be the height of fastidiousness."

Louisa smiled.—“ Ah, what deceivers you men are! and yet, I should not reproach you; for my own feelings likewise deceive me. I feel very happy, although you have such bitter, such terrible intelligence in store for me!”

“ What intelligence? I have already related all; and surely you may now, my lovely Louisa! compose your mind. Give up the pursuit of your family, and in future look on mine as yours.”

“ Dear Mr. Talbot! I cannot be deceived!” She then related to him all she had overheard; her reasons for believing their suppositions true; and the horror she felt on believing herself illegitimate.—She would now, she said, make no further effort to discover the authors of her being, as she could only be a reproach to them, and perhaps destroy the peace of their families.

Talbot now pleaded his own cause. He represented to her, that Mr. Listowel’s approbation of him should have great weight with her, even supposing their present surmises unfounded; as he was, at all events, the friend of her father, and had almost declared himself authorized to sanction the match; and that, by accepting him, she would gratify all her friends.

“ Generous Talbot!” exclaimed Louisa: “ can you for me make so many sacrifices?—Should I consent, will not your father—your family, have cause to

reproach me?—Even you yourself, when the present feelings excited by my unhappiness are abated, would, in secret, think I had acted without generosity, seeking my own happiness, and paying no regard to your interest!”

“Do not, my own Louisa! say so; your interest is my interest. My notions of marriage are perhaps peculiar. You are the only person in existence with whom I can connect myself in holy wedlock!—If you refuse me, I will give up the milder duties of civil life to my brother, and join the army on the Continent: therefore, my beloved! do not rashly deprive me of all hope.”

“Surely you are not,” replied Louisa, mildly, “so unsteady of principle!—No conduct of mine could bias your notions of right and wrong, or make you forsake the duties you were born to fulfil! This is a manœuvre,” said she, smiling, “to convince me there is a necessity for my turning aside from the strict path of duty.”

“ No, my friend ! for I think I never met so much strength of mind in one so young, blended with so much softness and modesty. Let me, however, believe those timid eyes are averted with softness more than dislike. Look at me, my friend !—believe, and trust in the steadiness of my affection for you, which can only cease with my existence !—But, if the firmness I admire in your character should degenerate into obstinacy, do not suppose I will spend my life in idle repinings !—No ; my walk in life will only be changed—my talents, my services, shall still be devoted to my country. My brother shall be the statesman, shall reside on our property, and eventually his children shall inherit it ; whilst I will join the banners of my country, and answer glory’s call ! Therefore, do not, my friend, for a mere punctilio, doom me to banishment !”

“ What am I to think !” she said.
“ Can I decide ?—I believe I am too interested a person to have my judg-

ment unbiassed. I will refer you to my father—my more than father!—he must in this point direct me;—and should he tell me that I may aspire to you, and that I shall not debase you, I will then try to flatter myself that I am not so contemptible; and think, that being so regarded by you, I may catch some rays of your glory; and shine, at least like the moon, with borrowed lustre.”

Talbot smiled. “This must content me. I do not wish to hurry you; but, as I am obliged to leave this early to-morrow, can you not give me an answer before then?”

“Yes, if I am allowed to return this evening,” answered Louisa.

Edward now sought Talbot in the study; and not finding him there, passed on to the inside room too suddenly for his friend to prevent it. He however met him near the door, that Louisa might escape unobserved. Edward was not

immediately sensible of her presence ; his face was red, and heated with passion ; haughty indignation was expressed in every line of his fine countenance.

“ Fine doings ! Would you believe it ? there is Mary above stairs dying, because, forsooth, she will not be allowed to marry that *rascal* Villars !—Both father and mother are worked upon by her. I believe if he were present they would beg of him to save their darling. When I went up I found her in strong hysterics, occasioned by the obduracy of papa and mamma ; who, although *Miss* went on her knees to them, and vowed celibacy if they did not consent to her marrying the man of her choice—still, notwithstanding the magnitude of the threat, continued firm ; and said, they would sooner follow her to her grave than allow her to form so unequal a union ! But, when they saw the state their refusal threw her into, they both relented, and accused each other of

harshness, and of having destroyed their *darling*! They wondered at such a giddy thoughtless girl preferring a man so much older than herself; acknowledged that they always had the highest opinion of Villars; and if it could be proved that he had not acted dishonourably, by endeavouring in any underhand manner to seduce her affections, that, if all this could be made evident, they might, after a time, if she continued constant, consent to the match. They agreed that, as far as they knew of him, he was highly respectable, and that they might as well give their consent, and make their poor child happy. Did you ever hear the like?—a girl of my sister's pretensions, to give her to a *nobody*? But it never shall be; Villars must first settle with me.”

“ Oh! what do you say?” exclaimed Louisa: “ surely your intentions are not as violent as your words?”

“ Dearest Louisa! are you there? I

should not terrify you by my impatience. Has Talbot told you all? Do you know that you are my sister? Come, embrace me; I will ever hold you very dear!"

"How fortunate I am in finding such a friend!" said poor Louisa; her countenance at the moment expressing the deepest sorrow. She could not, almost without shuddering, hear herself thus claimed as an illegitimate relation.

Edward continued:—"In giving you to Talbot I shall have my first wish. I have ever loved him as a brother, and looked up to him as an elder one. You had better now go to Mary, and leave us to arrange plans for your happiness. Mary is still in her dressing-room: if possible, induce her to give up this foolish whim."

She then left them, hoping Talbot would moderate Edward's wrath. She found Mary lying on the couch in a gentle slumber; her cheeks red and swelled, still wet with tears, looking like a spoiled

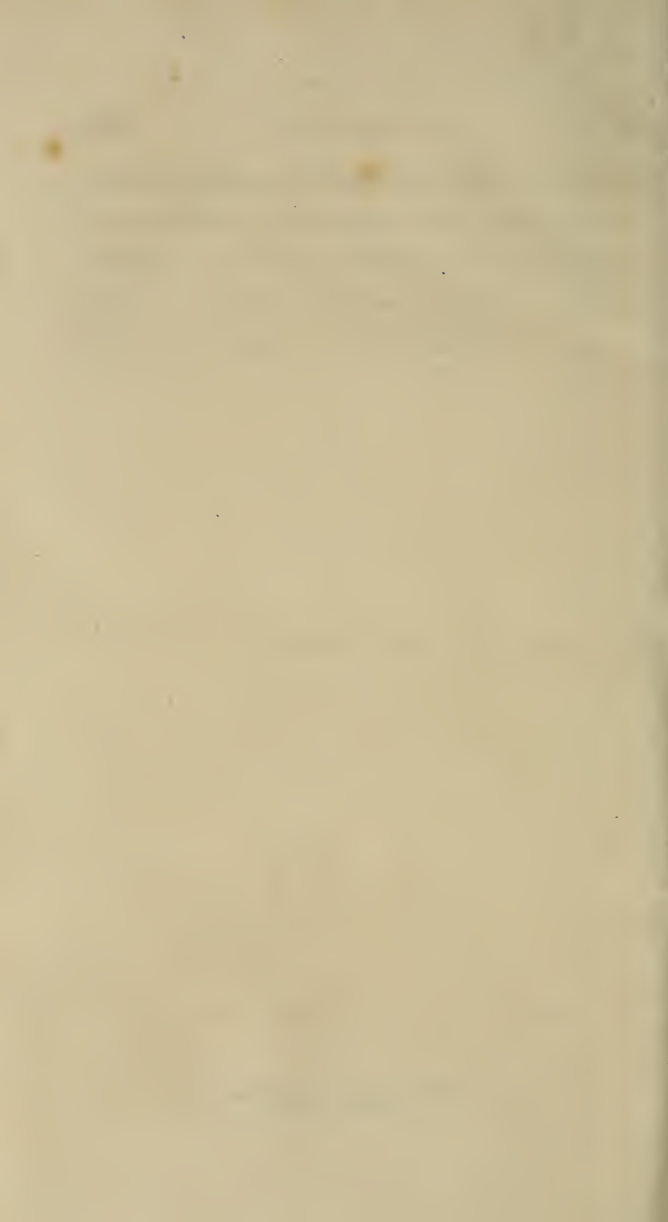
child that had cried herself to sleep. Lady Elizabeth was seated beside her, the picture of despair. She smiled on seeing Louisa ; and giving her a seat by her, said in a low voice—" She is now asleep : I may venture to tell you all that has passed."

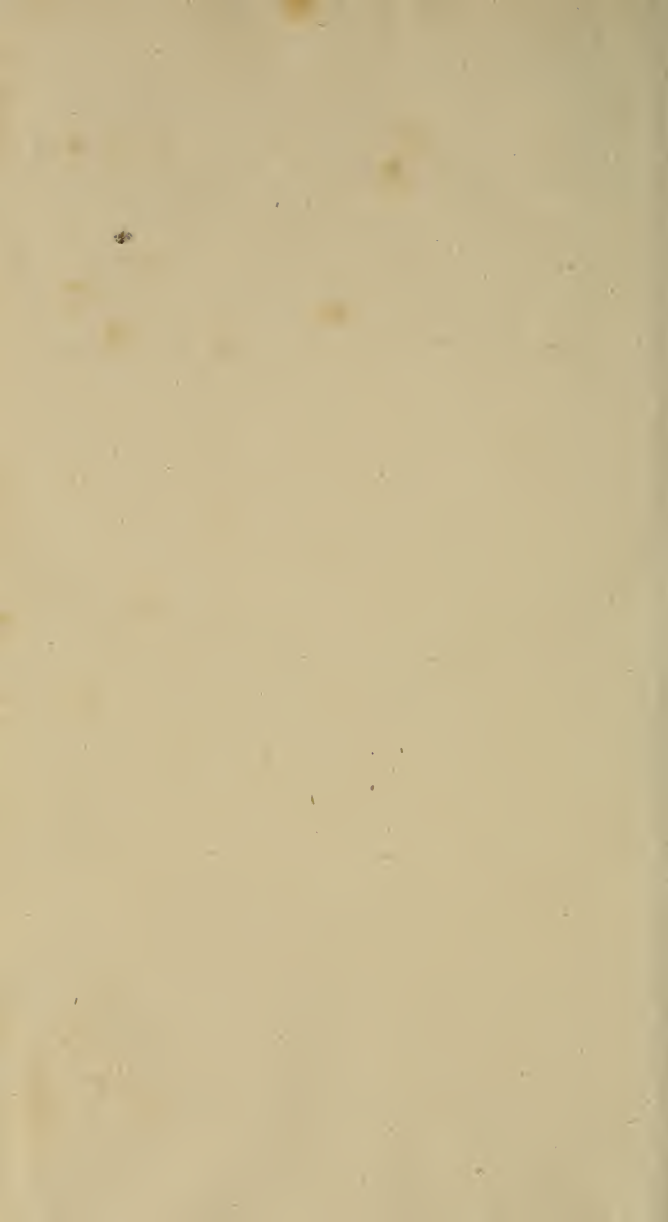
Louisa was in amaze how any young female could, in that open manner, avow attachment for one who never sought her favour. Lady Elizabeth then left Mary in her friend's charge, requesting she would watch by her ; and if she saw any change, or apprehended the least danger of the fit returning, begged she would ring the bell, and send her word.

Mary continued to sleep very quietly until Lady Elizabeth's return, who came, when dinner was nearly ready, for Louisa ; but, at Mary's earnest request gave them permission to dine together. She hoped her company might restore her daughter's cheerfulness ; who, she was sorry to see, still continued sullen.

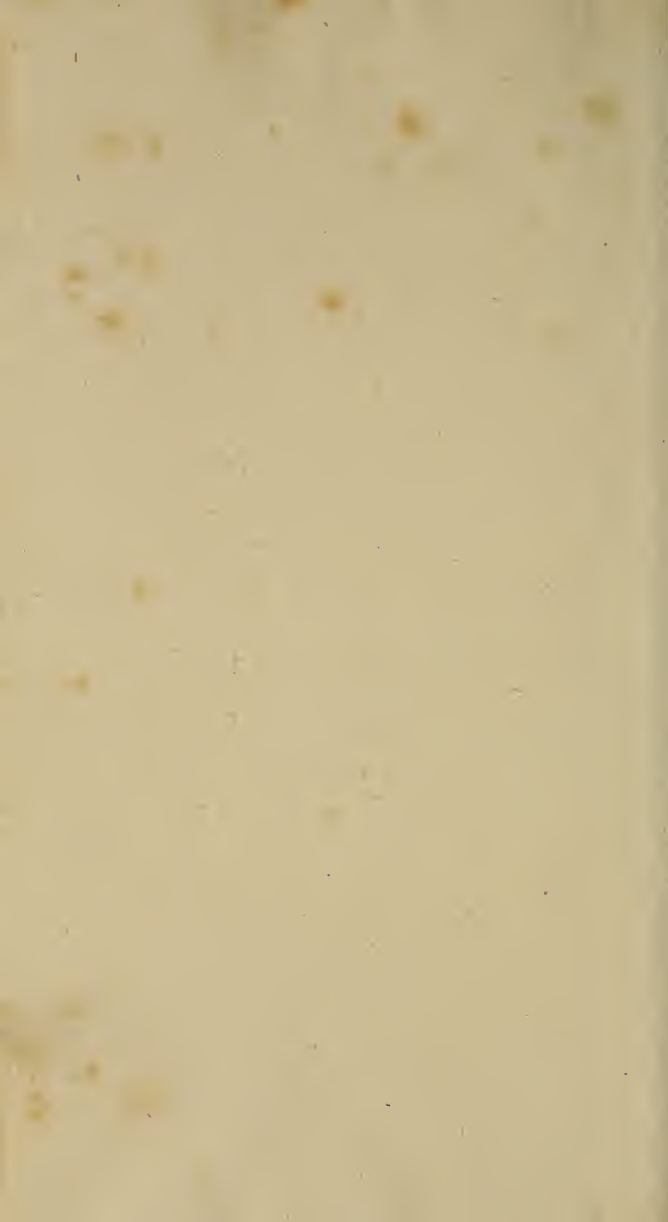
Louisa remained with her the whole of the evening; by which she lost all opportunity of seeing Talbot that evening, and feared she should not see him again before his departure for Dublin.

END OF VOL. 1.



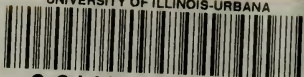








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